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THE

WORKS

OF THE

BRITISH POETS.

WITH

LIVES OF THE AUTHORS,

BY

EZEKIEL SANFORD. and

Robert Walsh, jr.

VOL. VII.

MILTON.

PHILADELPHIA:

PUBLISHED BY MITCHELL, AMES, AND WHITE.

William Brown, Printer.

1819.

10487

1872, Jan. 23.
Gift of
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Clerk of the Eastern District of Pennsylvania.

THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF

JOHN MILTON.

WITH

A LIFE OF THE AUTHOR,

BY

EZEKIEL SANFORD.

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LIFE OF MILTON.

THE monuments, which, in 1694, were still visible in Milton Church, near Abingdon, in Oxfordshire, attest the antiquity of our poet's family.* One of his ancestors took part in the wars of York and Lancaster; and suffered the sequestration of all his estates, except such as he held by his wife. John, the grandfather of our poet, was keeper of the forest of Shotover; and so bigoted a Roman Catholic, that, finding an English Bible in the chamber of his son John, he disinherited him for apostacy. John came to London; and, engaging in the profession of a scrivener, became so wealthy as to purchase houses in many parts of the city, and was able to retire from business many years before his death. He married Sarah Bradshaw,† the descendant of a Welsh family; by whom he had three children,—John, the poet, Christopher, and Ann.

* Life of Milton. By Edward Phillips, his nephew, 1694. Godwin's Lives of the Phillipses. Lond. 1815. App. II. p. 352. There is some doubt on this subject. The Rev. Mr. Todd was told by the Rev. Mr. Jones, that in the registers of Milton, the name of Milton is not to be found. It is added, that the Milton, alluded to by Phillips, is in Berkshire; and Dr. Newton says, he searched in vain for the monuments here mentioned. Todd's Edition of Milton's Poetical Works, 7 vols. Lond. 1809. vol. i. p. 2. note. So it is impossible to find Milton's own grave stone; and the plain reason is, that it was removed in 1679. Aub. Ap. Godw. p. 346.

† Toland has it Sarah Caston. Life of Milton, London, 1761, p. 4. The family name seems to have been *Caston;* but Aubrey tells us, upon the authority of Christopher Milton, her son, that the wife of Milton's father was a *Bradshaw*. Godw. App. No. I. Collections for the Life of Milton. By John Aubrey, F. R. S. Printed from the MS. copy in the Ashmolean Museum, at Oxford, pp. 335. 347.

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Christopher was early placed as a student in the Middle Temple; of which he lived to be an ancient bencher. During the civil war, he adhered to the king's party; and, when the parliament became victorious, he was only enabled to resume his old station at the Temple, by the intercession of his brother, John. He was of a modest and quiet disposition: his body, too, was feeble; and, being ill fitted, on both these accounts, for the digladiation of the bar, he devoted himself entirely to the practice of the chamber. He obtained, at length, some small employment at Ipswich; and, at the accession of king James the Second, was made a baron of the Exchequer, and a judge of the Common Pleas. But the abdication of James deprived him of both these offices; and he went back to the practice of law; spending the terms at the Temple, and the vacations at Ipswich. He was alive in 1674.*

Ann was given in marriage, with a considerable dowry, to Edward Phillips, of Shrewsbury; who became secondary in the Crown Office; and by whom she had several children. Two sons only survived; and they were both educated by their uncle, John Milton, the subject of this memoir; who was born at one of his father's houses, called the Spread Eagle, in Bread Street, London, Dec. 9th, 1608, at a quarter past six in the morning. He was early put under a private tutor, of the name of Young. In 1619, we are told by Aubrey,† 'his schoolmaster was a Puritan, in Essex, who cut his hair short;' and who, we may add, was probably the first to give his pupil's mind a turn of thinking upon religion and politics, which he certainly inherited from none of his ancestors.‡ We learn,

* Milton's Nuncupative Will, &c. Todd, vol. i. p. 165.

† Aub. Ap. Godw. ut sup. p. 337.

‡ Wood calls this the '*Committee Cut.*' Fast. Ox. vol. ii. p. 61. Milton took care to preserve his own 'clustering locks,' notwithstanding the example of his revered master.

from the same authority,* that Milton already composed verses; studied hard; rose early, and retired late. He sometimes continued at his books till twelve or one o'clock at night; and his father ordered the maid to sit up for him.

He was some time under the care of Mr. Gill, at St. Paul's School; and, on the 12th of February, 1624, 1625, he paid his ten shillings and eight pence for admission, as a minor pensioner, into Christ's College, in Cambridge.† He had already acquired a critical knowledge of the Latin; and the elegies, which he composed in that language, have gained him the reputation of being the first Englishman, who wrote such verses with purity and elegance. The precaution of affixing the dates is 'a boast,' which we can easily excuse; nor is it a proof of egregious vanity, that he should use the date of fifteen until he is sixteen.‡ It was about the time of his admission into college, that he versified the 114th and 116th Psalms; which he thought it worth while to publish. In the first year of his residence, his sister Ann lost an infant child. Milton composed its elegy; and Mr. Godwin not only thinks, that we have here 'a foretaste of the sort of writer he was afterwards to become'—but has transcribed two stanzas, which he supposes 'peculiarly' excellent; and hardly durst call the death of that child 'unfortunate,' which could be assured of having such lines written upon it.§ We have little sympathy with

* Aub. Ap. Godw. ut sup. pp. 337, 339.

† Reg. Coll. Birch's Life of Milton, 1753, p. 3. Dr. Johnson says he entered as a sizer.

‡ Johnson's Life. Dr. Johnson says, Politian gave Milton the example; and Mr. Todd says, Lucan gave Politian the example.

Est mihi, crede, meis animus constantior annis
Quamvis nunc juvenile decus mihi pingere malas
Coeperit, et nondum vicessima venirit aetas.

§ Godw. Phh. pp. 2, 3. He has Toland, (p. 6,) and almost all the others, on his side.

Mr. Godwin, in this respect; and we know not what 'sort of writer' Milton would have become, if he had always composed such verses as these:—

> Yet can I not perswade me thou art dead,
> Or that thy coarse corrupts in earth's dark wombe,
> Or that thy beauties lie in wormie bed
> Hid from the world in a low delved tombe,
> Could for pittie thee so strictly doom?
> Oh, no! for something in thy face did shine
> Above mortalitie, that shewed thou wast divine.

We do not pretend to know what is meant by these two last lines; and the two last of the other stanza are still more incomprehensible.

> Then thou, the mother of so sweet a child,
> Her false imagined loss cease to lament,
> And wisely learn to curb thy sorrows wild;
> Think what a present thou to God hast sent,
> And render him with patience what he lent;
> This if thou do, he will an offspring give,
> That till the world's last end shall make thy name to live.

Milton does not appear to have been, at first, a favourite in his college. He received no fellowship; and, on one occasion, was obliged, it seems, to undergo the chastisement of the rod.* 'Much controversy and spleen (says Mr. Godwin†) have been expended upon this anecdote of Milton's having been whipped at college; and Dr. Johnson, with his characteristic malignity, professes himself "ashamed to relate, what he fears is true, that Mil-

* Aub. Ap. Godw. ut sup. 'His first tutor there was Mr. Chapell, from whom receiving some unkindness [whipt him], he was afterwards (though it seemed opposite to the rules of the college) transferred to the tuition of one Mr. Tovell, who dyed parson of Lutterworth.' p. 339. This part of the MS. is headed 'From his bro. Chr. Milton.'

† Id. ibid. note *b*.

ton was one of the last students in either university that suffered the public indignity of corporal correction." *Erratum*, for *fears* IS *true*, read *hopes* MAY BE *true*.' The reader now expects to see the stain wiped away; but, instead of endeavouring to invalidate the anecdote, Mr. Godwin proceeds to prove, beyond all doubt, what Dr. Johnson only 'feared' was true. 'For my part, (says he,) I am not disposed to controvert the anecdote. It is related by Aubrey, the sincere and affectionate lover of the person of Milton, upon the authority of Christopher Milton, Milton's brother, with whom the poet lived in friendship, and who attested it after his death.' Then follows a note of two quarto pages; in which Mr. Godwin only shows, that he is chagrined at the indignity; and, though conscious that it was suffered, yet angry, that any body should mention it.*

* 'We learn from Wood, (says Mr. Wharton,) that Henry Stubbe, a student of Christ College, Oxford, afterwards a partizan of Sir Henry Vane, showing himself too forward, pragmatical, and conceited, was publicly whipped by the censor in the college hall. Ath. Ox. vol. ii. p. 560. See also Life of Bathurst, p. 202. I learn from some manuscript papers of Aubrey the antiquary, who was a student of Trinity College, Oxford, four years from 1642, 'that at Oxford, and, I believe, at Cambridge, the rod was frequently used by the tutors and deans: and Dr. Potter, while a tutor of Trinity College, I know right well, (was Aubrey flogged too?) whipt his pupil with his sword by his side, when he came to take his leave of him to go to the inns of court.' In the statutes of the said college, given in 1556, the scholars of the foundation are ordered to be whipped by the deans, or censors, even to their twentieth year. In the university statutes at Oxford, compiled 1635, ten years after Milton's admission at Cambridge, (Milton could not, then, have been 'one of the last,') corporal punishment is to be inflicted on boys under sixteen. We are to recollect, that Milton, when he went to Cambridge, was only a boy of fifteen. The author of an old pamphlet, *Regicides no Saints nor Martyrs*, says, that Hugh Peters, while at Trinity College, was publicly and officially whipped in the *Regent Walk* for his insolence.' Mr. Todd supplies another testimony. In Ch. 37, of the statutes of Christ College, it is provided, that, for certain offences, students shall be fined; *si tamen* adultus *fuerit; alioquin. virgâ corrigitur*. Vol. i. p. 14. It appears, that Milton, thus early commencing reformer, was 'too forward, pragmatical, and conceited,' about a plan of his

From some Latin verses to Charles Diodati, one of his schoolfellows, Mr. Wharton, and Dr. Johnson after him, think it is, also, 'plain that Milton had incurred rustication, a temporary dismission into the country, with perhaps the loss of a term.' Mr. Godwin is again enraged; and, though he does not undertake to disprove the interpretation, he is, we think, much more entitled to be angry in this case, than in the former. Milton says,

Me tenet urbs refluà quam Thamisis alluit unda,
  Meque nec invitum patria dulcis habet.
Jam nec arundiferum mihi cura revisere Camum,
  Nec dudum vetiti me laris angit amor.
Nuda nec arva placent. umbrasque negantia molles.
  Quam malè Phœbicolis convenit ille locus!
Nec duri libet usque minas perferre magistri,
  Cæteraque ingenio non subeunda meo.
Si sit hoc exilium patrios adisse penates,
  Et vacuum curis otia grata sequi,
Non ego vel profugi nomen, sortemve recuso,
  Laetus et exilii conditione fruor.
O utinam vates nunquam graviora tulisset
  Ille Tomitano flibilis exul agro;
Non tunc Ionis quicquam cessisset Homero,
  Neve foret victo laus tibi prima, Maro!

From the frequent mention of *exile*, and from the use of the words *vetiti laris*, there is little doubt, that, when Milton wrote this elegy, he had quitted the university against his will. But he does not declare, as Dr. Johnson thinks, 'that he is weary of enduring the threats of a rigorous master:' it is not 'some *thing* else,' but some *things* else, that his genius could not undergo; nor can we admit, that, by these

own for academical instruction. Hayley's Life of Milton, Lond. 1796. 'For me, (said the poet afterwards,) I have determined to lay up, as the best solace and treasure of a good old age, if God vouchsafe it me, the honest liberty of a *free speech from my youth*.' Works in Prose, 1698. vol. i. p. 220.

other things, besides threats, the author 'probably' meant 'punishment.' His design seems to have been, to compare the pleasures of the country with those of a college; and, on this account, Dr. Johnson should not have omitted the two essential lines, beginning with *nuda nec arva*. The threats of a rigorous master are not intended for himself particularly; neither is it at all evident, that the 'other things' are designed to refer exclusively to those 'threats.' Milton begins to enumerate the miseries of Cambridge; and, after mentioning some of the most prominent, includes the rest under the comprehensive *et cetera*. The elegy closes with a resolution of returning some time to Cambridge; and it is upon this combination of circumstances, that Dr. Johnson founds his conjecture of Milton's rustication. If Toland is to be credited,* the interpretation is decisively contradicted by the fact, that this elegy was written after Milton had taken his second degree, and while he was residing with his father at Horton, in Berkshire. We believe Diodati, his schoolfellow, was then a student of medicine; and that he was himself at home, appears from the expression, *patrios adisse penates*.

We shall now propose our own conjecture. Milton 'went to the university (we prefer to use the language of Dr. Johnson) with a design of entering into the church, but in time altered his mind; for he declared, that whoever became a clergyman, must "subscribe slave, and take an oath withal, which, unless he took with a conscience that could not

* Life of Milton, p. 7. Toland's sources of information were both ample and genuine. 'I learnt som particulars,' says he, 'from a person that had bin once his amanuensis, which were confirm'd to me by his daughter now dwelling in London, and by a letter written to one at my desire from his last wife who is still alive. I perus'd the papers of one of his nephews; learnt what I could in discourse with the other; and lastly consulted such of his acquaintance, as, after the best enquiry, I was able to discover.' pp. 3, 4.

retch, he must straight perjure himself. He thought it better to prefer a blameless silence before the office of speaking, bought and begun with servitude and forswearing." His unwillingness to engage in the ministry, perhaps not yet advanced to a settled resolution of declining it, appears in a letter to one of his friends, who had reproved his suspended and dilatory life, which he seems to have imputed to an insatiable curiosity, and a fantastic luxury of various knowledge. To this he writes a cool and plausible answer, in which he endeavours to persuade him, that the delay proceeds not from the delights of desultory study, but from the desire of obtaining more fitness for his task; and that he goes on, not taking thought of being late, so it gives advantage to be more fit.'

We have before mentioned, that Milton came away without a fellowship; and perhaps the reader has already anticipated us in the supposition, that, to take the requisite oath and subscribe the thirty-nine articles, being among the things to which Milton's spirit could not submit, he was allowed to go home; examine the subject; and try to think better of these qualifications. It does not appear, that the disfavour of his first master extended to any other member of the faculty; and, when, as we have seen, they would condescend to violate the rules of college, by transferring him to another,* there can be little doubt, that he was highly esteemed by the majority. Indeed, it is well known, that, at both universities, a good Greek and Latin scholar could seldom do amiss; and, if any undergraduate might claim impunity in this respect, it was certainly John Milton. When he offered himself for a fellowship, therefore, there was probably no impediment to his success, but an unwillingness to sign the articles, and take the oath.

* See above, page 4, note.

Our conjecture seems to be warranted by his own testimony. In an *Apology* against a pamphlet, supposed to have been written by the son of Bishop Hall, he takes 'occasion to acknowledge publicly with all grateful mind, that more than ordinary favour and respect, which I found above any of my equals, at the hands of those courteous and learned men, the fellows of that college wherein I spent some years: who at my parting, after I had taken two degrees, as the manner is, signified many ways, how much better it would content them that I would stay; as by many letters full of kindness and loving respect, both before that time, and long after, I was assured of their singular good affections towards me.'

It appears, upon the whole, then, that Milton went to the university with a design to enter the church; that, though he left it, without a fellowship, he was strongly solicited to stay; and that, notwithstanding his opposition to the oath and articles, he still entertained a resolution at some time to return. We can see no means of reconciling these circumstances, but upon the supposition, that, at the time of writing the lines to Diodati, he was residing at home, as a sort of probationer; and that, if, upon investigating the subject, he could satisfy himself of the propriety of the required qualifications, he should still execute his original determination of taking orders. It is upon no other supposition, that we can account for the anomaly, remarked by his biographers, of remaining at his father's house, for more than five years after he had left the university. We learn from himself, that, excepting an occasional visit to London to relieve himself with its amusements, procure books, and see his schoolfellows, the whole of this time was given to intense study;* and his eulogists have not omitted to add,

* Et totum rapiunt me mea vita libri.—Ad Diod.

that, besides other reading, he completed, in the same period, the perusal of all the Latin and Greek classics.

However this may be, we think it likely, that the study and reflection of these five years confirmed the author in those independent views of religion and politics, which a part of his early education had contributed to form; and for which his subsequent life was so eminently distinguished. He commenced the investigation of episcopacy, with a violent prejudice against its doctrines and discipline: every thing in his progress was doubtless turned in the most unfavourable light; and he ended, not merely with a negative unbelief of its orthodoxy,—but with a determination to spend his life in hunting down its absurdities.* By the perusal of the Greek and Roman authors, he became, at the same time, familiar with the glories of republicanism;† and he seems, at last, to have been convinced, not only, that mankind would do better without a king or a church,—but that his own services would be indispensable, in deposing monarchs, and overturning religious establishments.

It was probably the enthusiastic veneration, which he had now conceived for the ancient republics, that induced him to undertake a political pilgrimage to Rome and Greece.‡ The time of his setting out

* 'Some years (says he) I had spent in the stories of those Greek and Roman exploits, wherein I found many things both nobly done and worthily spoken: when coming in the method of time to that age wherein the church had obtained a Christian emperor, I so prepared myself as being now to read examples of wisdom and goodness among those who were foremost in the church, not elsewhere to be paralleled. But to the amasement of what I expected, I found it quite contrary; excepting in some very few, nothing but ambition, corruption, contention, combustion:—endless brabbles and counterplottings of the bishops,' &c. Apology.

† Aub. App. Godw. p. 344. 'His being so conversant in Livy and the Roman authors, and the greatness he saw donne by the Romanan commonwealth, and the virtue of their great commanders, induc't him to write against monarchie.'

‡ As a cause of Milton's journeying into Italy, was to be found

is thought, by Mr. Godwin, to be involved in some confusion. Milton himself says, that, after quitting the university, he remained at home five years; was absent on his travels but fifteen months; and returned 'eodem ferme tempore quo Carolus cum Scotis, rupta pace, bellum alterum, quod vocant episcopale, redintegrabat; in quo fusis primo congressu regiis copiis,—malo coactus, non sponte, parlamentum haud ita multo post convocavit.' Milton took his master's degree in 1632: five years at Horton will bring us to 1637, when his mother died; and the first route of king Charles, in the second Scotish war, was at Newburn, in August, 1640. 'The result is,' as Mr. Godwin thinks,* 'that a period of two years, from the spring of 1637 to

or fabricated, a story has been put in circulation, we know not by whom, that it was wholly an adventure of knight-errantry. In the famous lines to Diodati, he says,

Sæpius hic blandas sperantia sidera flammas
Virgineos videas praeteriisse choros:

And, in the next year after writing this elegy, 'he describes his falling in love (says Toland, p. 9), with a lady whom he accidentally met, and never afterwards saw.' It was upon these materials we suppose, that somebody has founded the tale of an Italian lady, who, happening one day to encounter Milton sleeping under a tree at Cambridge, wrote, and put into his hand, four lines of Gaurini; of which the purport was, 'Eyes, human stars! if you kill me, while closed, what would you do, if open!' It is added, that, 'eager from this moment to discover the fair incognita, Milton travelled through every part of Italy, seeking her in all directions, but in vain. His poetic fervour became incessantly more and more heated by the idea which he had formed of his unknown admirer: and it is, therefore, in some degree to her, that his own times, and the latest posterity, are indebted for the most passionate effusions of Paradise Lost.' The original teller of this tale has not even the praise of invention; for the history of Surrey had gone before; and the same story is told of Louis de Puytendre, a Frenchman. It may be found in Todd's Edition of Milton, vol. i. p. 26, and in the Poems of Miss Seward, p. 76. Mr. Godwin (p. 295, note) disbelieves the anecdote, because Milton is the 'author of Paradise Lost.' We should deny the fact, because there is no proof of it. Milton himself says, that, though there were reeds in abundance, there were no trees at all to sleep under in Cambridge:—

Jam nec arundiferum mihi cura revisere Camum:
Nuda nec arva placent, umbrasque negantia molles.
Ad Diod.

* Note to p. 357.

the spring of 1639, is passed over in his narrative unnoticed.'

Mr. Godwin commits two mistakes, with several oversights; and then charges upon Milton, and all his biographers, the confusion, which is imputable only to himself. Milton does not say, that he returned about the time when the royal forces were defeated; but about the time when the war broke out; in which war, he proceeds to relate, the king was beaten at the first onset, and obliged to call a parliament. He must have returned, therefore, previously to the rout of August, 1640. In the second place, the account of Edward Phillips, upon which Mr. Godwin is annotating, gives us a decisive contradiction of the statement, that Milton started on his travels in 1637. His nephew tells us, it was after the term of five years, and the death of his mother, in 1637, that Milton formed the resolution to travel; and it is some time under the marginal date of 1639, that he is said to have set out for Paris.*

Neither can we think, with Mr. Godwin, that this part of two years 'was spent, like the former years, at Horton.' Phillips speaks of Milton's 'putting himself into an equipage for such a design;' and equipage in this case must mean something besides trunks, clothes, and servants. He was to pass through France; and intended to visit both Greece and Italy. It was indispensable, therefore, that he should make himself familiar with French and Italian; be able to understand modern Greek; and have some knowledge of the manners, habits, and modes of the dif-

* Godwin, App. II. Life of John Milton. By Edward Phillips. 1694. p. 357. 'After the said term of five years, his mother dying, (marginal date, 1637,) he was willing to add to his acquired learning the observation of foreign customs, manners, and institutions; and thereupon took a resolution to travel, more especially designing for Italy; and, accordingly, (marginal date, 1639,) with his father's consent and assistance, he put himself into an equipage suitable to such a design; and so, intending to go by the way of France, he set out for Paris.'

ferent people, with whom he designed to converse. All this could not be achieved in a day; nor achieved in Horton at all. It is probable, therefore, that, after the death of his mother, Milton took lodgings in London, and spent a great part of the disputed time in preparation for his journey.

There are other circumstances, which might have convinced his biographers, that Milton did not leave England till some time in 1639. The compliments and attentions, which he every where received abroad, could only have been given to a man, who had already made himself known by his works. We cannot suppose, that Milton's Latin poems alone had rendered him so famous on the continent. *Comus*, though written in 1634, was not published till 1637: *Lycidas* appears at the end of the Cambridge Collections for the following year;* and, according to the opinion of Dr. Johnson, the *Arcades* were written about the same time. The very date of the two latter is, perhaps, sufficient to prove that he must have been in England in 1638;† and, if we allow the

* Godw Phh. pp. 5. 6.

† In the Gent. Mag. Jul. 1792, there is an account of a Bible, which is supposed to have been the companion of Milton's travels; and in which he occasionally wrote a prediction, after the manner of the almanack makers. One is dated at 'Canterbury city, 1639. This year of very dreadful commotion, and I weene will ensue murderous times of conflicting fight.' There is another, in verse, upon the 1 Maccab. xiv. 16. 'Now when it was heard at Rome, and as far as Sparta, that Jonathan was dead, they were very sorry.'

When that day of death shall come,
Then shall nightly shades prevaile;
Soon shall love and music faile;
Soone the fresh turfe's tender blade
Shall flourish on my sleeping shade.

These vague prophecies prove nothing with certainty. Milton may have returned at the close of 1639, and have made these predictions for the next year.—The authenticity of the Bible, and of the remarks, has been disputed. We can only say, that '*music*' was one of the first things, of which Milton would lament the loss. For the rest, see Gent. Mag. Oct. 1792, Feb. 1793, March, 1800.

necessary time for the news of his merit to reach the literati of France and Italy, it is probable that he did not start from home till about the beginning of the next year.

He had some verses printed, indeed, soon after leaving the university. They composed a sort of epitaph upon Shakspeare; and were published with the edition of that poet's works for 1632. It is not likely, that he received any distiches or tetrastiches from the Italians, on account of this poem. It concludes with a most frigid conceit, that Shakspeare's best tomb is the marble into which he turns his readers; and, like all other epitaphs, makes the poet's monument proclaim the futility of its own erection. We have seen it stated, that Shakspeare was no very great favourite with Milton; and, in Mr. Scott's *Life of Dryden*, he is said to have reproached Charles the First with 'having, as the chosen companion of his private hours, one William Shakspeare, a player.'* This was probably said, when he had become a furious writer against kings in general. He, then, indeed, made no secret of his opposition to the stage; and, in his *Discourse on the likeliest Way to remove Hirelings out of the Church*, one of the chief topics of invective is, the practice, among the clergy, of filling up their leisure hours with acting some play.† He was not such an enemy to the drama in his early days; and, in his Elegy to Deodati, he says,

* Vol. i. p. 13.

† 'In the colleges, (says he, in the Apology for his Animadversions on Smectymnuus,) so many of the young divines, and those in next aptitude to divinity, have been seen so often on the stage, writhing and unboning their clergy limbs to all the antic and dishonest gestures of trinculos, buffoons, and bauds: prostituting the shame of that ministry, which either they had or were nigh having, to the eyes of courtiers and court ladies, with their grooms and madmoiselles. There, while they acted and overacted, among other young scholars, I was a spectator; they thought themselves gallant men, and I thought them fools; they made sport, and I laughed; they mispronounced, and I misliked; and to make up the atticism, they were out, and I hist.'

Excipit hinc fessum sinuosi pompa theatri
Et vocat ad plausus garrula scena suos.

Some time in the year 1643, when the earl of Bridgewater resided at Ludlow Castle, in Shropshire, his two sons, Lord Brackley and Mr. Egerton, with their sister, Lady Alice Egerton, while passing through Haywood Forest, in Herefordshire, were overtaken by night, and the lady, for some time, lost. The adventure furnished an abundant topic of conversation, when they got home; and, at the solicitation of Henry Lawes, who was then teaching music in the family, Milton undertook to compose a mask upon the subject. It was acted at the castle on Michaelmas night; and the two brothers, the young lady, and Lawes, each bore a part in the performance. Lawes composed the music; and was afterwards the editor of *Comus*. The following lines are supposed to be meant for that eminent musician; who took the part of Comus.

———But first I must put off
These skie robes, spun out of Iris woof,
And take the weeds and likeness of a swain
That to the service of this house belongs;
And with his soft pipe, and smooth dittied song,
Well knows to still the wild winds when they roar,
And hush the waving woods.——

It has been conjectured, that *Arcades* was acted before the countess dowager of Derby, at her seat in Harefield, the year previous to the composition of *Comus*.* No reason is given for assigning the time so precisely; but, as Lady Derby died in January, 1636,† the *Arcades* must at least have been written before *Comus* was published; and, as the earl of Bridgewater, who married a daughter of her

* Todd, vol. vi. p. 143. † Ibid.

ladyship, lived at a much greater distance from Horton than the Countess herself, it is likely, that Milton first established his reputation with the latter; and, being afterwards introduced to the former, was solicited to make a second effort of his skill. Mr. Wharton tells us, that the *Arcades* was 'acted by the persons of Lady Derby's own family;' and Mr. Todd conjectures, that these persons could have been no other than the same Lord Brackley, Mr. Thomas and Lady Alice Egerton, who performed Comus. It seems, indeed, that they were famous for their abilities at a mask; for, in 1633, they assisted in the performance of Carew's Cœlum Brittanicum before the court.*

In August, 1637, Mr. Edward King, son of Sir John King, secretary for Ireland, under queen Elizabeth, James the First, and Charles the First, was sailing from Chester to Ireland, when the crazy vessel, in which he had embarked, was split upon a rock, and went to the bottom. A few escaped; and an attempt was made to get Mr. King into the boat; but we have the most unequivocal evidence, that the attempt proved unsuccessful. He had many friends in Cambridge; and his death was lamented in three Greek, nineteen Latin, and thirteen English poems. Milton's *Lycidas* was at the end of the collection; and, though Peck says, that it was placed last in consequence of the author's disagreement with Christ College, Mr. Wharton will have it, that the end of the volume was the place of honour. King had written some Latin iambics; and Milton asks,

> Who would not sing for Lycidas? He knew
> Himself to sing, and build the *lofty* rhyme.

Cleveland went farther:—

* Todd, vol. vi. p. 148.

—Our tears shall seem the Irish seas,
We floating islands, living Hebrides.

But a Mr. Booth exceeded all the rest; though his poem was not published in the collection. He has this epitaph upon Mr. King:—

Heere lies the love of gentle hearts,
The cabinet of all the artes.
Heere lies Grammar, out of which
Mute fishes learn their parts of speech.
Heere lies Rhetoriche, all undone,
Which makes the seas more fluent runne.
And heere Philosophy was drown'd,
Which makes the seas far more profound.*

In all the three poems now mentioned, Milton had imitated the Italian versification; and it was probably on account of this preference, that he was recompensed with so much extravagant praise, during his stay in Italy. His reputation must have had time to go before him; and, as his letter of advice from Sir Henry Wotton is dated April 13th, 1638,† it is probable, that he did not set out till about the close of that year, or the beginning of the next. It was in this letter that Sir Henry Wotton gave Milton the famous advice of 'I pensieri stretti, et il viso sciolto'—*thoughts close, and looks loose;* which same piece of advice he received from an old Roman courtier, and was accustomed to bestow it upon all his friends, who were about to travel.‡ This, and a direction as to the best route, are the only advice in this famous letter of Sir Henry Wotton. How Milton followed the former, is well known. Whether he adopted the latter, we cannot ascertain.

He started with a single servant, who accompanied him throughout his journey. The English

* Todd, vol. vi. p. 6. † Ibid. p. 179. ‡ Ibid. p. 184.

ambassador at Paris received him with kindness; and, at his own request, made him acquainted with Grotius, who was then embassador from Christiana, of Sweden. From Paris he went to Nicæa; from Nicæa, by water, to Genoa; thence to Leghorn, to Pisa, and to Florence; where he remained two months,—inspecting its curiosities, visiting the academies, and receiving compliments. The attentions of the Florentine literati could hardly be repaid by separate acknowledgments. Milton, therefore, calls over the roll, and makes one compliment serve for all. 'Tui enim Jacobe Gaddi, Carole Dati, Frescobalde, Bommatthæe, Clementille, Francine, aliorumque plurium memoriam apud me semper gratam, atque jucundam, nulla dies delebit.'* Francini wrote upon him an Italian ode; and Dati sent him a Latin epistle, in which he is called a second Ulysses, wandering about every where, to learn every thing, from every body.†

Preceding biographers have generally followed each other in stating, that, when Milton visited Galileo, he was in the dungeon of the Inquisition, for holding doctrines at variance with the established astronomical philosophy. 'But Mr. Walker has informed me, (says Mr. Todd,) that Galileo was never a prisoner *in* the Inquisition at Florence, although a prisoner *of* it. On his arrival at Rome, on February the 10th, 1632, that illustrious philosopher had surrendered himself to Urban, who ordered him to be confined, for his philosophical heresy, in the palace of Trinità de Monti.' Five months of imprisonment made him retract his opinions; but this confession only procured him a dismission from Rome; and the house of a Monsignor Piccolomini was assigned him as his future prison. About the beginning of December, 1633, however, he was en-

* Defensio Secunda.
† Ut novus Ulysses omnia ubique ab omnibus apprehenderet.

tirely liberated; and, after a short residence at the village of Belloguardo, near Florence, he removed to Arceti,—where, as it is supposed, he received the visit of Milton. In an Italian *Life*, by M. Rolli, it is conjectured, that some passages in *Paradise Lost*, which he supposes to approach the Newtonian philosophy, must have been the result of the poet's conversations with Galileo and his followers.*

From Florence Milton passed through Sienna, to Rome; where he remained another two months. Lucas Holstenius, the Vatican librarian, received him with hospitality; and took care to show him all the Greek authors, whether published or in manuscript, which had undergone his care and emendation.† It was by his means, also, that Milton became acquainted with Cardinal Barberini; whose attentions to the English poet have been dwelt upon, by his English biographers, as a mark of high and peculiar favour. It appears, however, that the cardinal did little more than his duty. 'At Rome,' says Dr. Bargrave, 'every forraigne Nation hath some Cardinall or other to be their peculiar guardian;' and, 'when I was four several times at Rome,' he continues, 'this Cardinall Barberini was guardian to the English.'‡ It is no great wonder, therefore, that, in the exercise of this official guardianship, he should, with his own hands, lead an English poet into a musical entertainment. Milton himself was as much deceived as his biographers; and, esteeming the circumstance as a mark of especial distinction, he afterwards repaid Barberini in a Latin epistle to Holstenius. 'De cætero, (says he,) novo beneficio devinxeris, si *Emmentissimum*§ Cardinalem quan-

* Todd, vol. i. pp. 30, 31.

† Toland, p. 13.

‡ MS. in the library of the Canterbury cathedral. Todd, vol. i. p. 33, note.

§ This title was first given to the cardinals by Barberini himself. That of Padrone belonged to the pope's chief nephew; and was afterwards conferred on this same cardinal, as the eldest nephew of

tâ potest observantiâ meo nomine salutes, cujus magnæ virtutes, rectique studium, ad provehendas item omnes arte liberales egregiè comparatum, semper mihi ob oculos versatur.'

At Rome, Milton also became acquainted with the two Italian poets, Selvaggi and Salsilli; the first of whom, in a distich, makes him equal to Homer and Virgil; and the second, in a tetrastich, sets him not only above both the Greek and Roman poets, but even above his own Tasso. With his honours thus thick upon him, Milton departed for Naples; and was introduced to Manso, marquis of Villa, by a hermit, who had been the companion of his journey. Manso was the patron of Tasso; and is not only mentioned, among the princes of Campania, in the twentieth book of *Gierusalemme Liberata*,—but received the dedication of a treatise, by the same author, intitled *De Amicitia*.* He went himself with Milton to view the curiosities of the city; often visited him, in person, at his lodgings; and, finally, wrote a distich of Latin verses, in praise of every thing but his religion.† If it was for these two lines

Urban VIII.; who, says Dr. Bargrave, 'had nothing in his mouth but Cardinall Padrone. Where is the Cardinall Padrone? call the Cardinall Padrone: speake to the Cardinall Padrone: nothing was heard of but the Cardinall Padrone.' Todd, vol. i. p. 34, note. Cardinal Barberini knew whom he was to caress; and, had Milton come with letters to any other guardian, he would have been more likely to show him out of a musical assembly, than to conduct him into it. 'When I was at Rome with the earle of Chesterfield, (we still use the words of Dr. Bargrave,) then under my tuition, 1650, at a yeare of jubile, this Cardinall (*formerly kind to me*) would not admit my lord or myself to any audience, though, in eleven months' time, tryed severall times: and I heard that it was because that we had recommendatory letters from our queen mother to Cardinall Copponies, and another from the dutchess of Savoy to Cardinall Penzirolo, and no letters to him, who was the English (I say Rebells) Protector; and that we visited them before him.' Ibid. p. 53, note.

* Phill. ap. Godw. pp. 359, 360.

† Id. ibid. He would have been an angel, if he had only been a catholic

Ut mens, forma, decor, facies, mos, si pietas sic,
Non Anglus, verum herle Angelus ipse foret.

that Milton sent back *Manso*, the marquis of Villa was certainly overpaid.

The patron of Tasso did our poet a more friendly service, by telling him, frankly, that he was too forward in promulgating his own opinions; and that, had he not visited Galileo, and been less free in his speech about religion and politics, he would have received yet more and greater marks of distinction. While he was preparing to embark for Sicily and Greece, he received intelligence of the civil war in England; and, thinking that his own country demanded his first care, he resolved to change his destination, and return home. Some merchants now brought him numerous reports of plots against his life by the English Jesuits; and advised him, by all means, not to travel by the way of Rome. But Milton seems to have wanted neither civil nor personal courage;* and, in a spirit of defiance, he set out again for Rome; resolving, says Toland, to maintain his doctrines even 'under the nose of the pope;' to dispute, whenever there should be occasion, and perhaps to fight, if it should become necessary. Fortunately, however, the Jesuits had not resolved to take his life, and the pope gave himself little trouble about his opinions. He was permitted to live as unmolested, and to speak as freely, as ever; and, though he spent two months more in Rome, we do not find him engaged in any adventures, of which it has been thought worth while to give posterity an account.

* He was reproached with weakness by the author of *Clamor Regii Sanguinis*; and he thus answers the charge: 'Neither am I (says he) slender; for I was strong and capable enough in my youth to handle my weapons, and to exercise daily fencing: so that, wearing a sword by my side, as became a gentleman, I thought myself a match for those that were much stronger, and was not afraid of receiving an affront from any body. I have still the same soul and vigour, but not the same eyes.' And we cannot but remark, that it is almost solely on this occasion, and for this reason alone, that he ever seems to lament the loss of his eyes.

From Rome he travelled through Lucca, Bononia, and Ferrara, to Venice; and, after shipping a collection of rare books, proceeded thence to Verona, to Milan, along the Poemine Alps, and by Lake Leman, to Geneva. Dr. Johnson thinks, he now considered himself as 'in the metropolis of orthodoxy;' and was happy to 'become acquainted with John Diodati and Frederick Spanhiem, two learned professors of divinity.' Diodati was, indeed, a noted theologian; but Spanhiem had his head too much filled with other things to find a place for divinity. Toland calls him 'the celebrated critic and antiquary;' and says he was alive in 1761.* From Geneva Milton passed into France, and returned to England. He now learned, that Charles Diodati had died in his absence; and, resolving to perpetuate the memory of so near a friend, he composed a pastoral poem, entitled *Epitaphium Damonis*. Diodati was descended from a family in Lucca; and might have been related to the Genevan professor, whom we have just mentioned. He was born in England; and became a student of physic. He is said to have written Greek letters to Milton;† and it is not probable, that he would be so frequently answered in Latin, unless he had been a good scholar.

Milton's next object was to procure a residence, and get into some kind of business. He took lodgings at the house of one Russel, a taylor, in St. Bride's Church-yard; and, as his two nephews, Edward and John Phillips, were, in a measure, cast upon the world, by the second marriage of his sister Ann,‡ he concluded to adopt them for his own, and be the superintendant of their education. He shortly after undertook the same office for the sons of some

* Tol. p. 15.

† Tol. p. 16. He speaks of 'two Greek letters of his to Milton, very handsomely written, and which,' he adds, 'I have now in my hands.'

‡ Godw. p. 4.

intimate friends; and, finding his room too small for the reception of his library, and the accommodation of his pupils, he removed into Aldersgate street, and took a garden-house at the end of an entry. He was generally a pattern to his scholars, of hard study and spare diet; but 'once in three weeks or a month, (says his nephew,) he would drop into the society of some young sparks of his acquaintance, the chief whereof were Mr. Alphry and Mr. Miller, two gentlemen of Gray's Inn, the beaux of those times, but nothing near so bad as those now-a-days; with these gentlemen he would so far make free with his body as now and then to keep a gaudy day.'* We suspect, from his early poems, that he was naturally prone to festivity and dissipation; and Aristotle had set him the example of being, at the same time, a fop and a philosopher.

His course of studies has been censured by Dr. Johnson; and the schoolmaster of Litchfield is certainly entitled to be heard on all questions of education. Milton seems to have taken an idea from Cowley, that it would be a great economy of time, if students could be made to learn, from one and the same author, the rudiments of language, and the principles of science. In five years, therefore, he made his scholars 'run over' (to use the words of his nephew) all the most celebrated Greek and Roman authors upon agriculture, physic, natural history, architecture, military tactics, astronomy, cosmography, geography, cynegetics and helieutics, education, and moral philosophy. The list is truly formidable:—Cato, Varro, Columella, Palladius, Hesiod, Celsus, Pliny, Vitruvius, Frontinus, Ælian, Polyænus, Lucretius, Manilius, Geminus, Aratus, Dionysius Afer, Oppian, Quintus Calaber, Appollonius Rhodius, Plutarch, Xenophon. After these, the student was put into the Arithmetic of Urstisius,

* Ph. ap. Godw. pp. 364, 365.

Riff's Geometry, Petiscus' Trigonometry, Bosco's Spherics, and Davity's Geography.* Then they were to learn Italian and French; to have a smattering of Hebrew, Chaldee, and Syriac; and to hear a theological lecture upon every Sabbath day.

Dr. Johnson recommends a very different course. As the sciences are seldom wanted for the purposes of active life, he thinks, that the season of education should rather be spent in acquiring correct notions of right and wrong, and in making ourselves acquainted with the general history of mankind, and the biography of particular individuals. 'Prudence and justice (says he) are virtues and excellencies of all times and of all places; we are perpetually moralists, but we are geometricians only by chance. Physiological learning is of so rare emergence, that one may know another half his life, without being able to estimate his skill in hydrostatics or astronomy; but his moral and prudential character immediately appears. Those authors, therefore, are to be read at schools, that supply most axioms, most principles of moral truth, and most materials for conversation.' We have the presumption to think that the disposition and capacities of a boy are little considered, when he is expected to become learned in the sciences, adept in morality, or fertile for conversation, at the same time that he is making himself skilful in the etymology and syntax of the dead languages. To suppose that even a man can, in the same passage, be learning to construe a sentence

* Ph. ap. Godw. pp. 362, 363. Mr. Godwin supposes that Homer, Æschylus, Sophocles, Euripides, Pindar, Anacreon, Herodotus, Thucydides, Plato, Virgil, Horace, Ovid, Terence, Catullus, Juvenal, Martial, Cicero, Livy, Sallust, and Tacitus, were excluded from the course, because Milton thought it would be 'a profanation to employ' the works of such authors 'as exercises' to acquire 'the rudiments of etymology, prosody, and syntax.' p. 315, note. If it had been Milton's sole object to teach these rudiments, does Mr. Godwin take him to have had so little sense, as to neglect the only work in which they could be correctly acquired?

and to calculate an eclipse,—to acquire 'axioms of prudence,' and to apply the rules of prosody,—to be furnishing himself with 'materials for conversation,' and storing up definitions of words,—appears the dream of a man, who never witnessed the experiment, or has forgotten the result.

'Of institutions (adds Dr. Johnson) we may judge by their effects. From this wonder-working academy, I do not know that there ever proceeded any man very eminent for knowledge: its only genuine product, I believe, is a small History of Poetry, written in Latin, by his nephew, Phillips, of which, perhaps, none of my readers has ever heard.' So much it was necessary to say, in order to substantiate with facts, what had already been proved in theory. It was said in the most profound ignorance of the truth; and, from the fury, with which Mr. Godwin flies at the doctor, whenever he meets or wherever he can find him, we suspect that his book, in quarto, was written chiefly to refute what he thinks so insolent a paragraph. Indeed, he has himself intimated nearly the same thing. 'It was accident,' says he, 'that first threw in my way two or three productions of these writers, (Edward and John Phillips,) that my literary acquaintance whom I consulted had never heard of. Dr. Johnson had told me, that the pupils of Milton had given to the world "only one genuine production." Persons better informed than Dr. Johnson could tell me perhaps of half a dozen. How great was my surprise, when I found my collection swelling to forty or fifty!'* Posterity was to know, therefore, that Dr. Johnson had committed a mistake; and to purchase that knowledge, they must be made to read 400 quarto pages. In this book-making age, it would be surprising, indeed, if, by dint of some bibliography upon fifty different works, occasional notices of Milton, a pretty

* Pref. p. vii.

full history of the civil wars in England, abuse of past and cotemporary critics, together with appendixes of dissertation and biography,—a volume of this size could not be easily manufactured.

Dr. Johnson has often been arraigned for his sneer at the wonder-working academy;* and his accusers do not seem to be so much out of patience, because he restricts its products to a single insignificant work on poetry; but because he says that work was composed in Latin; when, if he meant, as they will have it, the *Theatrum Poetarum*, all but these two first words of the title page is written in English. But an *Enumeratio Poetarum*, in Latin, by the same author, was published in 1669; and, as Dr. Johnson gives no specific reference to either work, Mr. Todd thinks it is more candid to believe that he alluded to the latter.† Mr. Godwin 'cannot imitate this candour. It is extremely improbable,' he thinks, 'that Johnson, who evidently knew nothing of what he was talking about, should ever have met with this scarce volume of Buchlerus, (to which the *Enumeratio* was appended,) and still more so, that he should have remarked the modest, and in that sense obscure, treatise printed at the end, and its author. Whereas we know that he had Jacob and Cibber lying by his side when he wrote his Lives of the Poets, and that the name of Phillips' *Theatrum Poetarum* must repeatedly have struck him.'‡

If we attend critically to the language of Dr. Johnson, the candour of Mr. Todd will not be found misplaced. First, then, he speaks of the 'only *genuine* product.' It was long ago suspected, that Milton bore a hand in the composition of the *Theatrum Poetarum*;§ but no attempt has been made to

* Gent. Mag. 1789, p. 416. † Todd, vol. i. p. 135.

‡ Godw. Phh. pp. 160, 161.

§ Mr. Wharton was the first to take formal notice of the suspicion; and he thinks, that Milton composed, at all events, the article on Shakspeare. Mr. Godwin is of a different opinion; but the only

rob Phillips of originality in the *Enumeratio*. Dr. Johnson, too, may have seen some of the voluminous translations of John Phillips: he would hardly fail, at any rate, of finding the *World of Words*, a dictionary, by Edward; but as none of these productions was original, they could not be called *genuine*. In the next place, Dr. Johnson suggests a doubt by interjecting the words 'I believe.' If he had actually seen the *Enumeratio Poetarum*, and the *Theatrum Poetarum* had only struck his eye in Jacob and Cibber, he might well 'believe,' from the identity of the author, and the similarity of titles, that the only difference in the two works, was, that, as we have just said, the latter was somewhat indebted to the hand of Milton. Again, he calls it a '*small* history.' The *Theatrum* was large enough to be published in a separate volume. The *Enumeratio*, styled, in the title page, *Compendiosa*, was, in Mr. Godwin's own language, 'a little essay,' appended to an edition of the *Phrasium Poeticorum Thesaurus*, by Buchlerus.* This was the *seventeenth*† edition of the *Thesaurus*; and yet Mr. Godwin talks of its being 'a scarce volume.' It was a *Dictionary of Poetical Phrases*; and yet Mr. Godwin supposes, that the compiler of our own *Dictionary* would not have been sufficiently interested to see what the volume contained. In the third place, Dr. Johnson calls it, in the most general terms, a '*History of Poetry*.' The *Theatrum*

reason he can possibly find, is, that the book 'is not worthy of Milton.' pp. 172. 328. 'Aristarchus (says Cicero) Homeri versum negat, quem non probat.' Ad. Fam. l. 3. ep. ii. We can only say, that there is so evident a correspondence of language in *L'Allegro* and the article on Shakspeare, that either Milton wrote the latter, or Phillips imitated Milton. In the close of Shakspeare's character, he is said to 'please with a certain *wild* and *native* elegance.' Theat. Poet. Milton says,

> Sweetest Shakspeare, Fancy's child,
> Warbles his *native* wood notes *wild*.
>
> L'Alleg.

* Godw. pp. 142, 145. † Ibid. p. 142.

was confined solely to the English poets; the *Enumeratio* extended to the poets of all countries: 'nempe Italorum, Germanorum, Anglorum, &c.' If Dr. Johnson 'is known to have had Jacob and Cibber,' so is he known to have had Wood, 'lying by his side;' and it could not have escaped him, that in the life of Phillips, not only the title-page of the *Enumeratio* is given at full length in the latter,—but the work itself is said to have been 'added to the seventeenth edition of Joh. Buclerus his book, entit. *Sacrarum profanarumque phrasium poeticorum Thesaurus*, &c. 1669.'* Finally, since the *Theatrum* was mentioned frequently in Jacob and Cibber, two of the most popular biographers, Dr. Johnson would hardly have suggested, that his readers knew nothing about it; but, as the *Enumeratio* was thrust into the corner of a *Thesaurus*, which, however popular at first, had been completely superseded by the *Gradus ad Parnassum*†—and as so obscure a work was only mentioned in Wood, who was seldom read except by authors,—Dr. Johnson might well say, that 'perhaps none of his readers had ever heard' of it.

Milton was now to teach other things, besides grammar; and other pupils, besides his two nephews and the sons of his friends. Some lines in *Lycidas* had already threatened the death of Laud, and the extermination of episcopacy. In 1641, the clamour against the bishops had become outrageous; and Milton, to use his own language, 'thinking, that, from such beginnings, a way might be opened to true liberty, engaged heartily in the dispute.'‡ In another work, he protests, that, 'should the church be brought under heavy oppression, and God have given me ability the while to reason against that man that should be the author of so foul a deed; or should she, by blessing from above on the industry

* Ath. Ox. pp. 1118, 1119. † Godw. p. 142. ‡ Def. Sec.

and courage of faithful men, change this her distracted state into better days, without the least furtherance or contribution of those few talents God at that present had lent me; I foresee what stories I should hear within myself, all my life after, of discourage and reproach.'*

This is not the reluctance of a man, who is dragged into controversy against his will; but rather seems the defiance of a forward disputant, eager to come at the man, who dares to oppose his opinions. Yet, in another place, he would fain persuade us, that it was 'with small willingness that he endured to interrupt his other pursuits, and leave a calm and pleasing solitariness, fed with cheerful and confident thoughts, to embark in a troubled sea of noises and hoarse disputes.'† And, again, in a letter to Henry Oldenburgh, written in 1654, 'Hoc cum libertatis adversariis inopinatum certamen, (he says,) deversis longè et amænioribus omninò me studiis intentum, ad se rapet *invitum*.' He had, by this time, discovered, that a religious brawl is not a holiday pastime; and, being at length somewhat tired of the controversy, he easily believed, that he entered into it with reluctance.

He began to show his good will for churchmen and church government, by writing two books on *Reformation*, in 1641. In the same year, Bishop Hall published a *Humble Remonstrance* in favour of episcopacy; and was answered by five ministers, under the title of *Smectymnuus*; a word composed of the initials of their several names,—Stephen Marshal, Edmund Calamy, Thomas Young, Milton's old master, Matthew Newcomen, and William Spurstow.‡ To this Answer, Archbishop Usher attempt-

* Reason of Church Government, B. II. † Ibid.

‡ Todd, vol. i. p. 45, note. The initial W. of Spurstow's Christian name was 'quaintly divided (says our author) in order to produce this celebrated word!' And then, being, as we take it, a good churchman, Mr. Todd proceeds to call this one of the 'tricks of

ed a *Confutation;* and Milton first replied to the *Confutation* with a treatise on *Prelatical Episcopacy;* but, not thinking the replication complete, he brought up two more books on the *Reason of Church Government.* Bishop Hall had, in the mean time, published a *Defence of his Remonstrance.* Milton wrote *Animadversions* on his *Defence;* and, when the bishop or his son returned a *Confutation* of the *Animadversions,* Milton had the last word in an *Apology for Smectymnuus,* written in 1642.

The objects of his attack, in all these publications, are the liturgy, the ecclesiastical revenues, the bishops, and the fathers. The liturgy is a mere device, he says, 'to debar the ministers of God the use of their noblest talent, prayer in the congregation;' and why not 'forbid all sermons and lectures too, but such as were ready made to their hands, like our homilies?' He then proceeds to satirize the contemptible necessity of being obliged to eke out a prayer by the adscititious aid of a written form; and cries aloud 'that such wisdom and diligence be used in the education of those that should be ministers, and such a serious and strict examination to be undergone before admission, as St. Paul to Timothy sets down at large; and then they need not carry such an unworthy suspicion over the preachers of God's word, as to tutor their unsoundness with the A, B, C of a liturgy, or to diet their ignorance and want of care with the limitted draught of a mattin and even song drench.'* He afterwards attacks, in detail, some of the 'errors, tautologies, and impertinencies' of the liturgy; and particularly lampoons the 'thanks in the woman's churching for her delivery from sunburning and moonblasting, as if

fanaticism.' But he should have remembered, that a latinized *w* necessarily becomes *uu;* and that, in those days, this letter was often separated, and printed thus VV. The alphabetical fanaticism of these divines, therefore, was not very extravagant.

* Animadv.

she was travelling, not in her bed, but in the desarts of Arabia.'*

What provoked our reformer the more, was, that beings, thus 'tutored' and 'dieted,' should get paid for doing nothing; and he inveighs, with his last effort of violence, against the system of ecclesiastical finance. It was not, he says, 'the effect of just policy or wholesome laws, but of the superstitious devotion of princes and great men that knew no better, or of the base importunity of begging friars, haunting and harrassing the death-beds of men departing this life in a blind and wretched condition of hope to merit heaven for the building of churches, cloysters, and convents; the black revenues of purgatory, the price of abused and murdered souls, the damned simony of tentals, and the hire of indulgences to commit mortal sin.'† These bolts are aimed more particularly at the origin of the system. A part of its abominations were crushed under the hand of Henry VIII.; but the change, for the most part, was only that of a pope for a king.

The bishops are taken to task, by the schoolmaster of Aldersgate-street, after the following manner: 'There be such in the world, (says he,) and I among those, who nothing admire the idol of a bishopric; and hold, that it wants so much to be a blessing, as that I deem it the merest, the falsest, the most infortunate gift of fortune: and were the punishment and misery of being a bishop terminated only in the person, and did not extend to the affliction of the whole diocess, if I would wish any thing in the bitterness of my sould to an enemy, I should wish him the biggist and fatest bishoprick.'‡ 'If Milton had been such a saint (adds one of his biographers) as never mist of a favourable answer to his prayers, I question not but at this rate more would covet to be his enemies than his friends.'§

* Apolog. † Animadv. ‡ Apolog. § Tol. p. 37.

The following simile is another mark of his kindness towards the prelates. 'A bishop's foot,' says he, 'that has all its toes (maugre the gout) and a linen sock over it, is the aptest emblem of the prelate himself; who, being a pluralist, may under one surplice hide four benefices, besides the great metropolitan.'*

Usher opposed his own learning to Milton's logic; and had, in his *Remonstrance* and *Defence*, referred particularly to the *Fathers* as conclusive authorities. 'Whatsoever (says Milton) either time, or the heedless hand of blind chance, has drawn down to this present in her huge drag net, whether fish or seaweed, shells or shrubs, unpicked, unchosen, these are the FATHERS.'* In another place, he calls them 'those more ancient and trusty fathers, whom custom and fond opinion, weak principles, and the neglect of sounder knowledge, have exalted so high, as to have gained them a blind reverence; whose books in bigness and number endless and immeasurable, I cannot think, that either God or nature, either divine or human wisdom, did ever mean should be a rule or reliance to us in the decision of any weighty and positive doctrines: for certainly every rule and instrument of necessary knowledge that God has given us, ought to be so in proportion as may be wielded and managed in the life of man.' And what man could ever think of wielding and managing the endless number of ponderous tomes, which go under the name of *The Fathers*?‡

Milton now engaged in an adventure, which turned his speculations into a different channel. 'About Whitsuntide it was, or a little after, (says his nephew,) that he took a journey into the country; nobody about him certainly knowing the reason, or that it was any more than a journey of recreation: after a month's stay, home he returns a married

* Apolog. † Prelat. Episc. ‡ Animadv.

man, that went out a bachelor.'* His wife was Mary, daughter of Mr. Richard Powell, a justice of Sandford, about three miles from Forresthill,† near Shotover in Oxfordshire. How or when Milton first became acquainted with his bride, or what had induced him to marry her thus slyly, his biographers seem not to have the curiosity to inquire. Sandford was in the vicinity of Oxford.‡ Milton must have frequently passed through the place, if we can suppose him to have visited his grandfather, at Shotover. It is not an unheard of thing, that a scholar should make vows of marriage, while at college; and, when we add to the charms of the lady, the attractions of a round thousand pounds, which were promised as her dowry,§ perhaps there will be little mystery in this stolen expedition. Whether Milton wanted a wife or not, there can be little doubt, that he stood in need of a thousand pounds.

It was an ill-omened match. The lady was a Catholic and a cavalier; Milton, a Presbyterian and a republican; and two opinions in religion and politics, says Aubrey, 'do not well on the same boulster.'‖ She had been accustomed to a great house, a great deal of company, and a great deal of noise.¶ Milton carried her to a confined tenement, which

* Ph. ap. Godw. p. 366.

† Todd, vol. i. p. 25. All the other biographers have followed Phillips in making his residence at Foresthill. Mr. Todd derived his information from an officer, who, as he was attached to the record commission, was more likely to be correct. He says, that Milton himself lived at Foresthill; and his account is corroborated by the testimony of Sir William Jones. Ld. Teignm. Life, 8vo. p. 83. Foresthill was three miles from Oxford. Id. ibid.

‡ Todd, ut sup. p. 28.

§ Nuncupative will of Milton, appended to the 2d Edition of his smaller Poems, by Wharton; and to his Life, by Todd. We shall afterwards endeavour to ascertain, how far this instrument is to be credited.

‖ Aub. ap. Godw. p. 345.

¶ Aub. and Ph. ap. Godw. pp. 344, 366.

he had taken at the end of an entry, in order to live in quiet. Almost the only company, which she saw, was her husband; and nearly all the noise, which she heard, was the flogging and cries of his nephews.* Philosophy, 'hard study, and spare diet,' had few charms for one who had been used to the most sumptuous living;† and, at the end of a month, the lady, through the entreaties of her friends, obtained permission to spend some time at her father's. Milton gave her till Michaelmas.

Michaelmas came; but no Mary. Milton wrote her a letter. She returned no answer. A second was sent; but she still remained silent. He tried a third, which met with the same fate; and, resolving to leave no room for mistake, in the blunders of the post, he at last had the patience to despatch a special messenger of his own. The messenger was treated uncivilly, and sent away. There was, therefore, no longer any doubt of his wife's contumacy; and he thought it high time, that the attention of mankind should be called to the question of divorce. He 'accordingly wrote two treatises, (says his nephew,) by which he undertook to maintain, that it was against reason, and the enjoyment of it not proveable by Scripture, for any married couple disagreeable in humour and temper, or having an aversion to each other, to be forced to live yoked together all their days.'‡ The first was the *Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce*, which appeared in 1644; the second, *Tetrachordon, or Expositions upon the four principal places in Scripture which treat of*

* Aub. ut sup. p. 344. This part of the story is not in Phillips.

† Todd, vol. i. p. 170. Justice Powell's house was seized by the rebels on the tenth of June, 1646. The original inventory of his effects was in the hands of Mr. Wharton; who says, that, 'by the number, order, and furniture of the rooms, he appears to have lived as a country gentleman, in a very extensive and liberal style of house-keeping.'

‡ Ph. ap. Godw. p. 368.

Marriage or Nullities of Marriage, published in the same year. These were followed by a translation of Martin Bucer's *Judgement* on the same side, in 1645. But the world did not [illegible] urgent necessity of entering into these [illegible] speculations. One of Milton's sonnets com[illegible] apathy; and no author of celebrity ev[illegible] a formal answer to either of his treatises. He was attacked, indeed, by an anonymous pamphlet, written, as he says, by 'a serving man turned solicitor;' and, between mortification at the little notice, which was comparatively given to the question and anger, that so ignoble a foe should aspire to be his equal, he replied in a truly pedagogical [illegible], entitled the *Colasterion, or a Rod of Correction for a Saucy Impertinent*, 1645.*

The passage extracted [illegible] lips will sufficiently show the object of Milton [illegible] these several publications. To use his own language, he supposed that Moses sanctions the dissolution of a couple, who 'could not fadge together,' whose 'tempers,' to adopt the more courtly phrase of Mr. Godwin, were 'incompatible' with each other.† Christ gave no such permission; but, as he came not to 'destroy the law,' it is attempted to reconcile the supposed contradiction, by considering what Moses said, as the rule of conduct, and what Christ added, as matter of advice. The passage in Moses is this: 'When a man hath taken a wife, and married her, and it come to pass that she find no favour in his

* Ph. ap. Godw. p. 368. His treatises made more noise than is generally imagined. The author was brought before the House of Lords, through the intercession of the clergy; but, says Godwin, 'whether approving his doctrines, or not favouring his accusers, they did soon dismiss him.' One sermon, at least, was preached against his books; and, not only were they noticed in many contemporary and subsequent authors,—but became the means of forming a sect, under the name of *Divorcers*, or *Miltonists*. Todd, vol. i. p. 53. 56.

† Godw. Phil. p. 9.

eyes, because he hath found some uncleanness in her: then let him write her a bill of divorcement,' &c. She may now take another husband. 'And if the latter husband hate her, and write her a bill of divorce, the former husband cannot take her back.*

From the latter verse, it would, at first sight, appear, that the husband has only to 'hate' his wife, in order to have her a bill of divorcement. We cannot think, that Moses intended to give this power to husbands, unless they have some reasonable cause,—not of dislike merely,—but of absolute hatred. In the former passage, 'uncleanness' is considered as a cause; and, from other parts of this same book, it is beyond doubt, that *uncleanness*, in this place, means *unchastity*. 'If any man take a wife, (we are told) and go in to her, and *hate* her—and say, I took this woman, and when I came to her, I found her not a maid,' it is incumbent on the father and mother to disprove his assertion. If they succeed, 'she shall be his wife again, and he may not put her away all his days:' if they fail, she is to be brought to her father's door and stoned to death.† It appears, then, that, according to Moses, the cause of hatred in the husband must be the fornication of the wife; and that, if this fact be disproved, let him hate her as he will, he shall live with her all his days. If there be any thing else in the language of Christ, we have not been able to find his meaning. 'Whoever (says he) shall put away his wife, *saving for the cause of fornication*, causeth her to commit adultery.'‡ Milton cites Grotius, indeed, as proving, 'that *fornication* is taken in Scripture for such a continual headstrong behaviour, as tends to plain contempt of the husband.' There can be no such construction put upon the passage we have just transcribed; and, even if there could, it must apply

* Deut. ch. xxiv. † Ibid. ch. xxii. ‡ S. Matth. ch. v.

as well to the language of Christ as to that of Moses.

We do not believe, with the rest of Milton's biographers, that he first formed a resolution to divorce his wife, and then wrote these treatises to strengthen his purpose, and justify his conduct. A man is not apt to be jealous of a person, whom he has ceased to love; and Milton, by remarking, 'that every motion of a jealous mind is not to be regarded,'* puts one in mind of Iago's caution—'Beware of jealousy, my lord.' Aubrey takes pains, however, in two different places, to declare he 'has so much charity for her, that,' he cannot believe, she would 'wrong his bed.' He never 'heard the least suspicions, nor had Milton of that any jealousie: but what man (especially contemplative)' he adds, 'would like to have a young wife environ'd [and storm'd] by the sons of Mars, and those of the enemie partie.' The king's quarters were then at Oxford.†

It was not till Milton undertook to carry his new doctrines into practice, that the stubbornness of his spouse began to yield. 'There fell out a passage,' says his nephew, 'which, though it altered not the whole course he was going to steer, yet it put a stop or rather an end (Phillips was a lexicographer) to a grand affair, which was more than probably thought to be then in agitation: it was indeed a design of marrying one of Dr. Davis's daughters, a very handsome and witty gentlewoman, but averse, as it is said, to this motion. However, the intelligence hereof, and the then declining state of the king's cause, and consequently of the circumstances of Justice Powell's family, caused them to set all engines on work, to restore the late married woman to the station wherein they a little before had planted: at last this device was pitch'd upon. There dwelt in the lane of St. Martin's le Grand, which

* Doc. and Disc. Div. b. ii. c. 13. † Aub. ap. Godw. p. 345.

was hard by, a relation of our author's, one Blackborough, whom it was known he often visited, and upon this occasion the visits were more narrowly observed, and possibly there might be a combination between both parties; the friends on both sides concentering in the same action, though on different behalfs. One time above the rest, he making his usual visit, the wife was ready in another room, and on a sudden he was surprised to see one whom he thought to have never seen more, making submission and begging pardon on her knees before him.'*

———Soon his heart relented
Towards her, his life so late, and sole delight,
Now at his feet submissive in distress.†

His own generous nature, and the mutual intercession of friends, 'soon brought him to an act of oblivion, and a firm league of peace for the future.'‡ The question of divorce was at an end; and the *Discipline*, the *Exposition*, the *Judgement*, and the *Rod*, were no longer of any account. The increase of his school had already induced him to hire a larger and more conspicuous house in the Barbican;§ and, until that could be prepared for his wife's reception, she was lodged at the house of Christopher's mother-in-law, in St. Clement's Church-yard. Milton's forgiveness went farther than reconciliation; for, when the rebels afterwards seized the estate of his father-in-law, he re-

* Ph. ap. Godw. pp. 368, 369. † Parad. Lost.
‡ Ph. ap. Godw. p. 369.
§ Ph. ap. Godw. p. 369. The Earl of Bridgewater, for whom Comus was written, owned extensive property in the Barbican; and it has been conjectured, that Milton's new house not only belonged to him,—but was let to our author free of rent. Todd, vol. vi. p. 178, note. Mr. Todd thinks it ungenerous in Dr. Johnson to 'observe, that Milton had taken a larger house in Barbican, for the reception of scholars.' But Dr. Johnson only copied the account of Milton's nephew. Ph. ap. Godw. p. 368.

ceived and entertained the whole family; and, by his interest with the prevailing party, was enabled, in some measure, to re-establish their affairs.

In the mean time, Milton continued to teach school himself; and to show others how to teach. His treatise *Of Education* was published in 1644; when, from the desertion of his wife, and the despair of her dowry, it became necessary to place more reliance on his pedagogical resources. 'Possibly his proceeding thus far in the education of youth (says his anxious nephew) may have been the occasion of some of his adversaries calling him pedagogue and schoolmaster: whereas it is well known he never set up for a public school to teach all the young fry of a parish, but only was willing to impart his learning and knowledge to relations, and the sons of some gentlemen that were his intimate friends; besides, that neither his converse, nor his writings, nor his manner of teaching ever savour'd in the least any thing of pedantry.'* And then it is suggested, that he was only endeavouring to put in practice the theory of his treatise on education; and the biographer is 'much mistaken, if there were not, about this time, a design in agitation of making him adjutant-general to Sir William Waller's army.'† 'Thus laboriously,' says Dr. Johnson, 'does his nephew extenuate what cannot be denied, and what might be confessed without disgrace. Milton did not sell literature to all comers at an open shop; he was a chamber-milliner, and measured his commodities only to friends.' When Dr. Johnson taught school, he was not ashamed to hang out his sign, and publish his advertisement.‡ He was no chamber-milliner. He kept open shop; and was ready to

* Ph. ap. Godw. pp. 370, 371. † Id. ibid.

‡ Gent. Mag. June and July, 1736, pp. 360. 428. under the head of *Advertisements*—'*At Edial*, near *Litchfield*, in *Staffordshire*, young gentlemen are boarded and taught the *Latin* and *Greek* languages, by *Samuel Johnson*.'

serve all the world—if they would only come to Litchfield.

It was in the same year, that Milton published his *Areopagitica, or a Speech for the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing.* 'The danger of such unbounded liberty, and the danger of bounding it,' says Dr. Johnson, 'have produced a problem in the science of government, which human understanding seems hitherto unable to solve;' and that such a reproach may no longer stand against human understanding, he proceeds to solve it himself, in a single paragraph. After touching and dismissing the heads of Milton's argument, he concludes that it is 'not more reasonable to leave the right of printing unrestrained because writers may be afterwards censured, than it would be to sleep with doors unbolted, because by our laws we can hang a thief.' The question is not, what this or that man may do to secure his own house, or to protect his own character. If he has bolts to his doors, it is well; and, if his virtues are a shield for his reputation, it is better. He will stand in no need of the laws which hang a thief, or mulct a defamer. But the question is, whether the government shall take our houses and our reputations into its own immediate care;—whether a public licenser is to say, what doors shall have bolts, and what characters shall be protected; who may be a thief, and who a calumniator.

'Debtors and delinquents,' says Milton, 'may walk abroad without a keeper, but inoffensive books may not stir forth without a visible jailor in their title. Nor is it to the common people less than a reproach; for, if we be so jealous over them, as that we dare not trust them with an English pamphlet, what do we but censure them for a giddy, vitious, and ungrounded people?—And it reflects on the reputation of our ministers, also, of whose labours we should hope better, and of the proficiency which their flocks reap by them, than that after all this

light of the gospel which is, and is to be, and after all this continual preaching, they should still be frequented with such an unprincipled, unedifyed, and laic rabble, as that the whif of every new pamphlet should stagger them out of their catechism. This may have much reason to discourage the ministers, when such a low conceit is had of all their exhortations and the benefiting of their hearers, that they are not thought fit to be turned loose to three sheets of paper without a licenser.' The treatise, of which this passage is a part, begins to command more attention, in England, than it has hitherto done; and a Mr. Knight has lately written a book concerning Dr. Johnson's criticism on Milton's versification, chiefly to introduce extracts from the *Areopagitica*.

Milton had not always been so zealous a stickler for typographical freedom; and, when he shook the *Rod* over the *Solicitor*, who answered his book on divorce, he did not omit to chastise Mr. Carryl, the licenser, for suffering the answer to be published. 'Mr. Licenser,' says he, 'you are reputed a man discrete enough, religious enough, honest enough, that is, to an ordinary competence in all these: but now your turn is to hear what your own hand has earned you, that when you suffered this nameless hangman to cast into public such a spiteful contumely upon a name and person deserving of the church and state equally to yourself, and one who has done more to the present advancement of your own tribe, (the Presbyterians,) than you, or many of them have done for themselves. Whatever the state might do concerning it, supposing it were a matter to expect evil from it, I should not doubt to meet among them with wise, and honourable knowing men. But as to this brute libel, so much the more impudent and lawless for the abused authority which it bears, I say again, I abominate the censure

of rascals and their licensers.'* This is the champion of unlicensed printing. So enraged was he, indeed, because this Presbyterian licenser imposed no restraint upon the press, that, though he had favoured the 'tribe' before, he never afterwards forgave them.†

It has been usual to refer the composition of *Allegro* and *Penseroso* to the period, of which we are now speaking. They appear, for the first time, in a collection of Milton's poems, published by Moseley, in 1645; but it has been conjectured, with some plausibility of evidence, that they were written while the author resided with his father at Horton. When Milton presented the volume to his friend Rouse, he says, 'manus attulit *juvenalis olim*:' the two poems were inserted before *Lycidas* and *Comus;* and, as Moseley tells the reader, that the 'author's peculiar excellency in his studies was too well known to conceal his papers, or to keep me from attempting to solicit them,' Mr. Todd concludes, that the manuscript had been heretofore suppressed, and was only drawn forth now, by the importunity of his bookseller.‡ The arrangement of the poems we consider as an accidental circumstance: the concealment of the author's papers does not necessarily make them a dozen years old; and, as more than three-fourths of the edition were occupied with what are known to be his early productions, he probably made no account of *Allegro* and *Penseroso;* and, in speaking of the whole volume, might very properly say, '*quem* manus attulit juvenalis.'

Sir William Jones has given another conjecture, which seems to be supported upon foundations equally slender. The villagers of Forest Hill have a tradition, that Milton once lived in that place; and we learn, from at least two different sources, that

* Colast. † Joh. Life. ‡ Todd, vol. i. p. 24. vol. vi. p. 73.

some papers, in his own hand writing, were found in a house near the church, which is pointed out as his residence.* That he occasionally resided at Forest Hill, after his first marriage, we find no difficulty in believing; but that he wrote *Allegro* and *Penseroso* there, because the scenery of the place corresponds, in some respects, with the descriptions in the poems, we are not quite so ready to admit. Sir William Jones takes the following lines from the *Allegro* to be a picture of the beauties about Milton's retreat:—

> Sometime walking, not unseen,
> By hedge-row elms, or hillocks green,—
> While the ploughman near at hand,
> Whistles o'er the furrow'd land,
> And the milk maid singeth blithe,
> And the mower whets his sithe.
> And every shepherd tells his tale
> Under the hawthorn in the dale.
> Straight mine eye hath caught new pleasures,
> Whilst the landskip round it measures;
> Russet lawns, and fallows gray,
> Where the nibbling flocks do stray,
> Mountains, on whose barren breast
> The labouring clouds do often rest.
> Meadows trim with daisies pi'd,
> Shallow brooks, and rivers wide:
> Towers and battlements it sees,
> Bosom'd high in tufted trees—
> Where perhaps some beauty lies,
> The cynosure of neighbouring eyes.
> Hard by, a cottage chimney smokes
> From betwixt two aged oaks.†

Three out of this long catalogue of beauties, Sir William Jones was fortunate enough to witness,

* Lord Teignmouth's Life of Sir W. Jones, 8vo. p. 84. Let. to Lady Spencer, Oxford, Sept. 7, 1769.

† L'Alleg. vv. 57—82.

when he visited Forest Hill. 'We were saluted, on our approach to the village,' says he, 'with the music of the mower and his sythe; we saw the plowman intent upon his labour, and the milk maid returning from her country employment:' and, as if such things were peculiar to Forest Hill, the writer thinks this 'concurrence of circumstances' is one proof, that the poem must have been written in that place. He seems, indeed, to be aware, that the coincidence was much too partial to warrant such a conclusion; and he would account for the deficiency, by observing, that 'it was neither the proper season of the year, nor time of day, to hear all the rural sounds, and see all the objects mentioned in the description.' But surely no season of the year, or hour of the day, could hide from his eyes the 'barren mountains,' the 'shallow brooks,' the 'wide rivers,' the 'towers and battlements,' and 'the cottage amidst the oaks.'

Again, nightingales are described in the *Penseroso;* and 'the groves near this village are famous for nightingales.' But are there not nightingales enough in other places? Or did ever a poet visit a region, where he could not hear Philomel? Milton talks of sweetbriars, vines, and eglantines. Sir William saw briars and vines in abundance: the eglantines were not to be found; but, as he discovered some honeysuckles, 'it is evident,' he says, 'that the poet meant a sort of honeysuckle by the eglantine.' Indeed, had the correspondence been ever so perfect, it would have been no proof, that these poems were composed during the author's residence at Forest Hill. A man seldom sits down to write a poem, as he does to sketch a landscape; and Milton might have described the country five years after he had seen it, just as well as when he was upon the spot. Mr. Todd maintains, that the poems were composed at Horton; that the scenery was evidently

taken from Harefield; and that, when the author mentions towers and battlements, bosomed in high trees, where a beauty resides, a cynosure to neighbouring eyes, he can only allude to the countess dowager of Derby.*

From the publication of these poems till the year 1647, Milton seems to have passed his time in quiet and study. As his course of education was completed in five or six years,† the first class must have gone from his hands some time in 1645; and, as the studies of the remaining scholars had grown easy by use, our author was relieved in part from his pedagogical duties, and found leisure to collect the materials, and begin the composition, of an English *History*.‡ The earl of Bridgewater's estates in the country were seized by the republicans in June, 1646; and, as those in the city must have shared the same fate, in the following year, Milton, who is supposed to have been a tenant of the earl, was turned out of his house, and obliged to take refuge in a smaller mansion, which looked into Lincoln's Inn Fields. Toland says, he removed 'a little after Fairfax and Cromwell marched through the city with the whole army to quell the insurrection' of the people against the parliament;‖ and this event, as we learn from a more recent publication, took place early in the month of August, 1647.¶ Milton

* Todd, vol. i. pp. 18, 19.
† Ph. ap. Godw. p. 362.
‡ Defens. Secund.
§ Todd, vol. vi. p. 191, note.
‖ Tol. p. 59.
¶ Cromwelliana. Fol. pp. 196. Lond. 1810. p. 34. This work consists of excerpts from upwards of one hundred and ten newspapers, printed between 1642 and 1651. We extract, as a specimen, one or two paragraphs, which relate to our present subject.

'His excellency (the general) Sir Thomas Fairfax drew, this day, most of his forces into Hyde Parke, marched through the city of London with all the horse and foot, and train of artillery, with drums and trumpets, and colours flying. First part of the horse marched in, then his excellency, with his life guard after him, (coroner Joyce, and some six or seven more, bare headed, encompassing;) then the foot, led by major general Skippon. Presently after the train of artillery. Lieutenant general Cromwell brought

submitted, with less reluctance, to the necessity of going into a smaller house, because the last sickness of his father, who came to live with him in 1649, had driven away his Forest Hill relations, and left him in little need of a larger.

As literature must be silent amidst the noise of arms, we hear nothing more of our author for the two succeeding years. The Roundheads had now

up the rear of the foot, and quarter-men marched after the horse.—*Perfect Summary*, &c. Aug. 7, 1647.'

'Cromwell is now gone to the Isle of Wight: it is thought that his honour will not take it as it hath done. Colonel Hammond is governor thereof; he should have continued, and he may; nay, he will; only Master Cromwell is *Dominus fax totum:* yet it is a jealousy that Master Cromwell, being marched south, will hardly nose about.—*Mercurius Melancholicus*, Sept. 4 to 12, 1647.'

Cromwell's nose was a frequent topic of merriment in some of the journals of the day. The *Pragmatic Mercury*, for January 11, 1647–8, in giving an account of a debate, says, that 'Mr. Cromwell stood up, and the glow worm glistening in his beak, he began to spit fire.' Cromwelliana, p. 38. In the same paper of August 1, 1648, we have an account of the expedition against the Scots. 'Noll Cromwell is fallen into a bog at Monmouth;' and, 'notwithstanding the exhortations of his best gifted commanders,' his shoeless myrmidons 'will not budge a foot northward.' They had 'a large promise of shoes, stockings, and money; but the devil a foot will these saints stir. They have as little mind to look northward, as Noll's nose hath to turn eastward towards Westminster.' Ibid. p. 42. In the number for March 5th, an account is given of the dissentions in the army. Henry Martin and some others were struggling for the command; 'insomuch that *Ruby Nose* drew his dagger in the house on Saturday, and clapping it in the seat by him, expressed great anger against Harry and his levelling crew.' Ibid. p. 53. In November, of the preceding year, the house had ordered this wicked journal to be suppressed. Ibid. p. 36. It kicked, on this occasion, for the last time. In the *Mercurius Eleuticus*, for February 28, of the same year, Cromwell is frequently called a brewer; and is said to have stroked the duke of Gloucester's head, and asked him, 'sirrah, what trade do you like best?' The duke told him, that, being a king's son, he hoped the parliament would allow him some means out of his father's revenue, to maintain him like a gentleman, and not put him apprentice like a slave.' *Nose Almighty* makes answer, 'boy you must be an apprentice, for all your father's revenue will not make half satisfaction for the wrong he hath done the kingdom, and so *Nose* went blowing out.' Ibid. p. 53. So in the *Parliamentary Porter*, August 28, 1648. 'nothing is heard now amongst the brethren but triumph and joy,' says the editor, 'singing and mirth for their happy success, (thanks to the Devil first, and next to *Noll* Cromwell's nose,) &c. Ibid. p. 45.

brought Charles I. to London; and the commissioners from the lords and commons began to treat with him for a composition. On the 12th of November, 1647, at twelve o'clock at night, the speaker read a letter from Cromwell, in which he gave an account of the king's escape from Hampton Court, the place of his residence, or rather, of his confinement. Cromwell had frighted him with an anonymous letter; and, at nine o'clock, of the preceding evening, he slunk out by the back stairs to the water side.* About the first of January, 1647, 1648, the commons resolved to hold no further communion with his majesty; and to continue the powers of the committee of twenty-one, sitting at Derby house. It was on this occasion, that Cromwell 'spit fire;' quoted the scriptural passage, 'Thou shalt not suffer an hypocrite to reign;' and concluded his speech by laying his hand upon the hilt of his sword. As the king was now down, the next blow was aimed at the lords; and, in order to bring the subject to a discussion, Cromwell alarmed *them*, also, with an anonymous letter.† This, and the order for the king's trial, had the desired effect. The lords agreed to dissolve themselves, and go home.‡ The king was at length taken; and, after a series of indignities and sufferings, was, as all know, tried as a traitor,—condemned,—and executed.§

It was now Milton's province to justify these proceedings; and he accordingly wrote a treatise upon the *Tenure of Kings and Magistrates;* 'proving (the title page says) that it is lawful, and hath been held so through all ages, for any, who hath the power, to call to account a tyrant, or wicked king; and, after due conviction, to depose, and put him to death, if the ordinary magistrate have neglected or denied to do it: And that they, who, of late, so

* Cromwelliana, p. 36. † Ibid. pp. 37, 38. ‡ Ibid. pp. 50, 51.
§ Jan. 30th, 1649. Hume. ch. lix.

much condemn deposing, are the men that did it themselves.' The Independents were delighted with the zeal of their defender; and, when he published, in the same year, *Animadversions* on the Presbytery at Belfast, and *Observations* on the Peace concluded between Charles I. and the Irish Papists,* the council of state rewarded him with the appointment of Latin secretary. The Independents had determined to correspond in this learned language, in pure spite to the French; which, as it was the language of monarchists, might, they were afraid, be the means of introducing monarchical ideas.

But Milton was obliged to serve his new masters in other things besides foreign correspondence. A few days after the death of the king, a work was published, under his name, called the *Icon Basilikè*, or a Portraiture of his Sacred Majesty in his Solitudes and Sufferings. Hume says, it was reprinted fifty times in a twelvemonth;† and Milton compares its effects upon his countrymen to those of Cæsar's will upon the Romans. The *Icon* must, therefore, be broken; and, in 1649, there was published, 'by authority,' *Iconoclastes*, or the Image Breaker, by John Milton. It was not then doubted, that Charles was the real author of his own portraiture; nor was it till 1686, that the sale of the earl of Angleseа's library disclosed a manuscript note on a leaf of his copy; in which he says, upon the authority of the duke of York, that 'this was none of the said king's compiling, but made by Dr. Gauden, bishop of Exeter.' The discovery gave rise to a great deal of controversy; and 'the proofs brought to evince that the work is or is not the king's, (says Hume) are so convincing, that, if an impartial reader peruse any one side apart, he will think it impossible, that

* In the second article of the treaty, the king promises the repeal of those acts, which forbid the Irish to burn oats in the straw, and to plough with horses by the tail. Tol. p. 81.

† Hist. Eng. ch. lix.

arguments could be produced, sufficient to counterbalance so strong an evidence.'* He is inclined to think, however, that the royalists have the better of the dispute; and his opinion is founded solely on the internal evidence of the book itself. The style, in his opinion, resembles that of the king much more than that of Dr. Gauden;† though it is a little remarkable, that, according to Dr. Walker, the relation of Gauden, there occur many expressions in the book, which were habitual to the bishop of Exeter.‡

Milton had next to meet an antagonist more formidable than either King Charles, or Bishop Gauden. Charles, prince of Wales, now an exile in Holland, persuaded Salmasius, a professor of polite learning in the university of Leyden, to write a defence of his father, and of regal government. Salmasius was then in the pay of the Dutch administration; and, if we had not been told, that he received a hundred jacobuses for his work, we might wonder, how a pensioner of a republic should be writing a treatise in favour of monarchy. The *Defensio Regia* was published in Holland, in 1649; and, as soon as it crossed the channel, the council of state directed their Latin secretary to draw up an answer. The *Defensio pro Populo Anglicano* appeared in 1651; and, so completely did it answer the expectations of the author's employers, that Hobbes is said to have declared, he knew not, of the two antagonists, whose language was the best, or whose arguments the worst. Salmasius was a great critic; and Milton did not forget to pick barbarisms in his Latinity. This question must be left to the schoolmasters; for Milton falls upon Salmasius, and Johnson falls upon Milton.

* Hist. Eng. ch. lix. † Id. ibid.

‡ Tol. p. 75. Toland is the great champion of this side. See Amyntor at the end of the volume.

—Some polemics use to draw their swords
Against the language only and the words;
As he who fought at barriers with Salmasius
Engag'd with nothing but his style and phrases,
Mov'd to assert the murder of a prince,
The author of false Latin to convince;—
And counted breaking Priscian's head a thing
More capital than to behead a king.

Butler.

The question in dispute concerned every government in Europe; and the champion of monarchy reigned almost absolute over the literature of the times. An answer to such a writer, upon such a question, could not fail to find readers. It was soon known throughout the continent. Milton received visits and compliments from all the foreign ambassadors; was tempted, by the offer of great preferments, to go into France and Italy; and 'the only inducement of several foreigners that came over into England,' says Aubrey, 'was chiefly to see O. Protector, and Mr. J. Milton.' They 'would sée,' he adds, 'the house and chamber where he was born.'* His book was burnt by the hands of the common hangman at Paris and Toulouse; nor is it any thing but a testimony to his powers, that the same earl of Bridgwater, who had acted a part in *Comus*, wrote in the title page of his own copy, *Liber igne, Author furcâ dignissimi.*† Salmasius had been invited to Sweden, by Christiana; who treated him with so much attention, that, when he was sick, she would sit by his bed sidé, and listen to his conversation. Milton's *Defence* is supposed, by some, to have occasioned his expulsion from court, with circumstances of indignity and contempt; but others tell us, that he was dismissed with marks of honour, and a train of attendance almost regal.‡ He died in

* Aub. ap. Godw. p. 338. † Tod. vol. i. p. 77, note.

‡ Dr. Johnson was, we believe, the first to mention this fact. Phillips, and almost all the others, have been willing to believe the other story.

September, 1653; and Milton believed himself, and was ready to make others believe, that he died of the *Defensio Populi*.* But we learn from Mr. Godwin, who has no doubt of all this, that Salmasius was 'confined to his bed during almost the whole of his residence' in Sweden:† it is certain, that he was at the Spa, for his health, at the time of his death; and, according to his biographer, Clementius, he died of that same gout, which, at last, brought Milton himself to the grave.‡

The *Defence* of Milton was answered by an *Apologia pro Rege et Populo Anglicano, contra Johannis Polypragmatici (alias Miltoni Angli) Defensionem Destructivam Regis et Populi.* It came out anonymously; but Bishop Bramhall was supposed to be the author; and, being an ignoble book, a reply appeared, in 1652, under the name of John Phillips, the younger nephew of Milton. 'Non poteram,' says he, 'quin hujus ineptissimi nebulonis petulantiam retundendam mihi, ne rogatus quidem, susciperem.' How 'unasked,' will appear from the account of his brother, Edward. Milton 'committed the task,' says he, 'to the youngest of his nephews; but with such exact emendations before it went to press, that it might very well pass for his.'§ A *Supplement* to the *Apology* was published in 1653; and, as the original work had been attributed to an eminent bishop, the real author was now willing to give his own signature, and ready to reclaim his own property. He turned out to be John Rowland,

* Defensio Secunda. † Godw. Ph. p. 15.

‡ Vit. et Epist. Cl. Salmasii, ab Ant. Clementio. 1656. Tod. vol. i. p. 81.

§ Ph. ap. Godw. p. 347. Perhaps the language of John Phillips was purposely left ambiguous. We have followed the interpretation of Mr. Godwin, who translates it, 'I could not prevail upon myself not to attempt, thus voluntarily and uninvited, to repress his insolence.' P. 18. note. It may be rendered, 'I could not have forborne, even had I been uninvited, to undertake the confutation of this petulant and silly antagonist.'

an English divine.* The *Defensio Populi* was answered by other publications, both abroad and at home. Salmasius himself had partly finished a reply; and the imperfect production was afterwards given to the world by his son. Milton's *Defence* procured him compliments even from Athens; but it is not probable, that the praises of modern Greece could much inflate his vanity; and, in the answer to his friend's letter, on the subject, he seems to think, that the only benefit he shall derive from that quarter, will be, a specific for the disorder of his eyes.†

As every thing about Milton must be extraordinary, the loss of his eyesight has been converted into a wonder. We are told how late he bent over his books at night; what headachs he underwent; what warnings he received from the physicians; and how nobly he slighted their advice;—how much disinterestedness there was in 'preferring his duty to his eyes;' and what magnanimity he displayed, in studying himself blind for the good of the human race.‡ His enemies, on the other hand, were little inclined to give him so much praise for his diligence; and, for their own parts, they said, there was no doubt, that the loss of his sight was a judgment from heaven, for his attempt at impugning the regal doctrines of Salmasius. One of these accounts is as likely as the other. The truth seems to be, that Milton's eyes were constitutionally weak; and that the intenseness of his application only accelerated

* Todd, vol. i. p. 82, note. It was the fashion of the times to play upon names; and Rowland thus analyses that of Phillips:—

> *Phy* nota factoris *Lippus* malus omnibus horis,
> Et malus et Lippus, totus malus ergo *Philippus*.

† Epistle to Leonard Philaras.

‡ He seems himself to have been persuaded, that he

> ——Lost them overply'd
> In liberty's defence.

an event, which must inevitably have taken place at an early period of his life. He tells us himself, that 'ad *naturalem debilitatem* occulorum accesserant et crebri capitis dolores.'* The history he gives of his symptoms to Philaras, is utterly inconsistent with the supposition of a disease induced by study;† and the well known circumstance, that one eye began to fail, and became extinct, some years before the other, is wholly at variance, we believe, with the usual course of occular disorders, arising from a cause, which must operate equally, and at once, upon both eyes.‡ But a fact, communicated by Aubrey, seems to place the matter beyond controversy. 'His father,' we are told, 'read without spectacles at eighty-four;' but 'his mother had very weak eies, and used spectacles presently after she was thirty years old.'§ That Milton was his *mother's child*, there can be little doubt. His enemies often reproached him with effeminacy: he had no beard at twenty-three;‖ and his complexion was so remarkably fair, that his fellow students nicknamed him 'the Lady of Christ's College.'¶ If he re-

* Def. Sec. † Epist. ut sup.

‡ Dr. Anderson tells us, that his disorder was a *gutta serena*. Sir William Adams says, that it is sometimes 'exceedingly difficult to determine between the first approaches of gutta serena, and of cataract;' and he thus describes the symptoms, which attend the latter: 'The disease generally commences at first in one eye, and, by the time it has made any considerable progress, the other eye becomes affected.' *Essay on Cataract*, Lond. 1817.

§ Aub. ap. Godw. p. 346. Phillips says, in a loose way, that his eyes began to decay 'about a dozen years before' he became actually blind. Ap. Godw. p. 375. He was about forty-five at that time; and 'above a dozen years,' taken from this, will leave us about thirty.

‖ There can be no other meaning to the ode on himself, on coming twenty-three years old:—

> My hastening days fly on in full career,
> But my late spring no bud or blossom shew'th,
> Perhaps my semblance may deceive the truth,
> That I to manhood am arrived so near.

¶ Aub. ap. Godw. p. 337.

press his wonder, 'that only one man in England could write Latin, and that man blind.'

We know not upon what authority this anecdote is related; and, even if it be true, we are at a loss to see how it proves Milton's agency to have been 'considered as of great importance.' The same men, who could 'artfully suspend' a treaty, would not lack art to justify the suspension by a public falsehood. That Milton was considered as a person of little consequence in the administration, is abundantly evident, not only from his own testimony,—but from that of his biographers and cotemporary historians. A young friend had solicited his intercession for the secretaryship in the embassy to Holland. 'I am grieved,' answered Milton, Dec. 18, 1657, 'that it is not in my power to serve you in this point, inasmuch as I have very few familiarities with the *gratiosi* of the court, who keep myself almost wholly at home, and am willing to do so.' 'He does not appear,' says one of his earliest biographers, 'to have been in the confidence of Cromwell during the whole government, there being no trace of his activity in all the vast collection of Secretary Thurloe's papers.'* Again, 'even during the prevalence of Milton's party,' says Hume, 'he seems never to have been much regarded; and Whitlocke talks of one Milton, as he calls him, a blind man, who was employed in translating a treaty with Sweden into Latin.'† The expression of Whitlocke is the more remarkable, because his history is professedly confined to an 'account of what passed from the beginning of the reign of Charles I. to the restoration of Charles II.' But the restored king himself, in the proclamation against Milton's books, calls the author an 'obscure' personage;‡ and it is somewhat singular, that, in a work of so much detail as the *Crom-*

* Tol. p. 97, note.
† Hist. Eng. ch. lxii. sub fin.
‡ Tol. p. 113, note.

welliana, the name of Milton should not once occur. Indeed, it was chiefly by strangers that he was caressed and visited;* and we are told, upon what seems to be good authority, that he was 'allowed a weekly table for the entertainment of foreign ministers, and persons of learning.'†

The latter fact will, in part, enable us to account for the inconsistency of Milton, in continuing to act as Latin secretary to the new government, after Cromwell had swerved from all his republican principles, and become a despot under the name of protector. 'Having now tasted the honey of public employment,' says Dr. Johnson, he 'would not return to hunger and philosophy; but, continuing to exercise his office under a manifest usurpation, betrayed to Cromwell's power the liberty which he had defended.' Mr. Godwin, on the contrary, cannot bear to think, that the author of *Paradise Lost*,—which book is his standing topic of argument,—should ever have acted from so mean a motive; and we are accordingly told, that Milton only submitted to the load of despotism for the good of his country,—magnanimously repressing his own indignation at present abuses, and patiently expecting the advent of better times.‡ 'Officially,' too, says the apologist, 'he had no concern but with the foreign politics of Cromwell; and his foreign politics he for the most part approved.'§ This wretched shift is followed with an allusion to the 'noble and courageous advice' which was given to Cromwell in the *Defensio Secunda*. Mr. Godwin is willing to forget, that, for one line of 'courageous advice,' there were two of servile flattery;‖ and that he has himself re-

* Aub. ap. Godw. p. 338. 'He was much more admired abroad than at home.'

† Tol. p. 110, note. ‡ Godw. Phh. p. 31. § Ibid. p. 30.

‖ 'Deserimur, Cromuelle, tu solus superes, ad te summa nostrorum rerum rediit, in te solo consistit, insuperabili tuæ virtuti cedimus cuncti,' etc. He is 'civis maximus et gloriosissimus, dux publici consilii, exercitum fortissimorum imperator, pater patriæ.' Dr.

corded, in another place, the very month and year in which Milton crowned his humiliation by presenting Cromwell with a copy of his book.* He must have been less acquainted with the protector, than his opportunities of observation will suffer us to admit, if he did not know, that Cromwell would probably swallow all the flattery, and give his admonitions to the wind. Milton's present employment was attended with considerable dignity. He had a fixed salary; and was enabled to entertain all his visiters at the public expense. The office of schoolmaster was comparatively mean: the gains were more precarious: there could be no such thing as keeping a weekly table for the reception of 'foreign ministers, and persons of learning;' and the difference between the two stations was, perhaps, considered as cheaply purchased by the sacrifice of a little political consistency.

The servility of bowing to power, when once reconciled to a man's better feelings, will easily slide into a habit; and the restoration of the old republican parliament gave Milton another opportunity to display his skill at flattering the strongest party. Cromwell died in September, 1658. His son Richard immediately took his place; and parliament was ordered to meet in January, 1659. Milton 'prepared, against the sitting,' says Mr. Godwin, a *Treatise of Civil Powers in Ecclesiastical Causes;* showing, if we may believe the title page, that it is not lawful for any power on earth to compel in matters of religion. But, in May, 1659, Richard came down; and the long parliament resumed its functions. 'This event,' says Mr. Godwin 'was a source

Johnson compares Cromwell to Cæsar; who, says he, 'when he assumed the perpetual dictatorship, had not more servile or more elegant flattery.' If Cromwell had known, as well as Cæsar, how to relish the elegance of classical latinity, the comparison would not have been so inept.

* Godw. Phh. p. 27. May, 1654.

of great exultation to Milton; and accordingly gave him new encouragement to proceed in his labours for the public good.'* He seems, himself, to have had no doubt, and Mr. Godwin plainly intimates, that the downfal of Richard was the effect of the *Treatise of Civil Power;* and the triumphant writer, resolving to follow up so salutary a blow, addressed to the long parliament 'a second part of his just plan' for a religious constitution, under the title of *Considerations touching the likeliest Means to remove Hirelings out of the Church.* He calls the long parliament the 'supreme senate, whose magnanimous councils first opened and unbound the age from a double bondage under prelatical and regal tyranny; above our own hopes heartning us to look up at last like men and Christians from the slavish dejection wherein from father to son we were bred up and taught; and thereby deserving of these nations, if they be not barbarously ungrateful, to be acknowledged, next under God, the authors and best patrons of religious and civil liberty that ever these islands brought forth?' Yet, among other laudable works, it was for turning this same parliament out of doors, in 1653, that Cromwell was called, in Milton's *Second Defence*, the 'father of his country.'†

* Godw. Phh. p. 86.

† Warburton calls Milton a 'timeserver;' and Mr. Hayley is upon the point of calling Warburton worse things; but he suddenly compassionates the poor prelate; and, stopping, like Neptune, at quos ego—' concludes to spare him for the present. 'Milton,' says he, 'a poet of the most powerful, and, perhaps, the most independent mind that was ever given to a mere mortal, insulted with the appellation of a time-server; and by whom? by Warburton, whose writings and whose fortunes—but I will not,' &c. Life of Milton, 2d edit. Lond. 1796. Ded. p. 17. Mr. Hayley need not have told us who is the object of his 'poetical idolatry.' Milton could not have been a timeserver, because he was a most powerful poet; and the fact of his having bowed to power, in whatever hands it came, is conclusively disproved by asserting, that he had, perhaps, the most independent mind ever given to mortal.' As Mr. Hayley tells us, he is a peaceful man, not given to 'literary strife,' he may never

But this gifted assembly, from which Milton hoped so much, was soon destined to follow the protectorate of Richard Cromwell. The nation consisted chiefly of royalists and presbyterians; and the long parliament was equally detested by both these parties; who agreed to unite against this common enemy, and only wanted a leader to concentrate and guide their scattered powers. That leader was found in *honest George Monk;* who marched from Scotland to London with only 6000 men; and found his countrymen so weary of broils and revolutions, that they were willing to follow any body, and submit to any thing, for the sake of repose. For the present, however, the kingdom was in more confusion than ever. Monk would not tell the people, what he intended to do: he did not seem to know himself; and, while the nation was in a state of the most anxious suspense,—while every individual was almost in despair of public tranquillity, and those who had the power in their hands appeared to be utterly at a loss how they should use it,—Milton undertook to show, that it was a case of no difficulty, and published a treatise, called the *Ready and Easy Way to Establish a Free Commonwealth* The first edition appeared early in February, 1660; and was designed for the edification of the new parliament, which Monk had ordered to be summoned. But, as the first writs of election were recalled, and the time of meeting necessarily postponed, a second edition, much enlarged, was soon after published.*

have been engaged in logomachies enough to know the meaning of *petitio principii.*—What does he mean, when he afterwards says, that 'to praise appears to have been an occupation peculiarly suited to Milton's spirit?' p. 93. Again, p. 129, he does not seem to deny, that his idol was a timeserver; and only contends, that he is just like 'all the rest of Parnassus.' 'A poet,' he says, 'is as apt to applaud a hero as a lover is to praise his mistress.'

* Milton does not seem to have been entirely alone. Wood mentions Rota, or a Model of a Free State, which, he says, was published by some one in the beginning of February, 1659. 'About which

Mr. Todd mentions a *Letter concerning the Ruptures of the Commonwealth*, as having been written by Milton about this period.* A *Brief Delineation of a Free Commonwealth*, addressed to Monk, in 1659, was, it seems, unquestionably his; and *Idia Democratica*, or a *Commonweal Platform*, as well as a *Model of a Democratical Government*, though anonymously printed, are also thought to betray their origin in the same source.† Nothing, at any rate, can be more thoroughly democratical than Milton's ideas of government. Both he and Mr. Godwin think, that one may rule his fellows, and yet 'walk the street as other men, and be spoken to freely, familiarly, friendly.'‡ The Americans are the last persons to think governors a superior order of beings; but it is impossible, that men should maintain authority when they make themselves so cheap. In the same democratical spirit, Milton wrote *Brief Notes* upon a sermon preached in March, 1660, by one Dr. Griffith; and was immediately answered by L'Estrange, in a pamphlet, illiberally styled *No Blind Guides*. Milton might have rejoined with a motto from Cicero; whose countrymen, he says, did not reject the advice of Drusus because he was blind; but, 'cum sua ipsa non videbant, *cæcum* adhibebant *ducem*.'§ Wood says, that the *Aphorisms of State*, which appeared in 1661, and the *Cabinet Council*, or the Arts of Empire and Mysteries of State, published three years before, were both the productions of our author.‖ They are not mentioned by our predecessors.

Milton seems now to have become weary of polical discussion. He had written in vain, long enough; none of his plans had been adopted; and he had

time,' he adds, 'John Milton published his Ready and Easy Way to Establish a Free Government, 1659-60. In answer to which came out a waggish Censure, pretended to be made the Rota, printed in the latter end of March, 1660.' Ath. Ox. vol. ii. p. 593. ed. 1721.

* Vol. i. p. 97. Tol. p. 149.

† Todd, vol. i. p. 98.

‡ Read. and Eas. Way.

§ Tusc. Quæst. i. v. §38.

‖ Ath. Ox. 1721. vol. i. p.

finally got out of patience with mankind. In his opinion, there was no longer any hope for them; and, though, in the *Ready and Easy Way*, he was willing to make one more effort to set his countrymen in the right, he had, after all, but little expectation of their taking his advice. Stocks and stones, he said, could not be less inattentive; and, in the language of forlorn hope, he calls upon the earth to witness the stupidity of man, that could not see the right way, when it is so obvious in itself, and when it had been so often pointed out. 'Thus much I should perhaps have said,' he concludes, 'though I were sure I should have spoken only to trees and stones; and had none to cry to, but with the prophet, 'O earth, earth, earth!' to tell the very soil itself, what its perverse inhabitants are deaf to: nay, though what I have spoken should happen (which thou suffer not, who didst create man free! and thou next, who didst redeem us from being servants of men!) to be the last words of our expiring liberty.' This, indeed, he fearfully forbodes; and, reconciling himself, as well as he can, to what he considers as the near approach of political death, he asks, for the last boon, that he may only have time to say his prayers. 'If,' says he, 'their absolute determination be to enthral us, before so long a lent of servitude, they may permit us a little shroving time first, wherein to speak freely, and take our leaves of liberty.'

Yet even this small favour could not be granted. The people and the parliament were tired of experiments: any government was better than anarchy; and, when it was known that Charles the second had landed in England, his subjects were nearly frantic for his restoration. The republicans fled away; and Milton hid himself in Bartholomew Close, near West Smithfield. The bodies of the leading regicides were dug up and hung as traitors; and the *Iconoclates* and *Defensiones* of Milton, with the *Obstruc-*

tors of Justice, by Goodwin, were ordered to be burnt by the common hangman. The republican chiefs, who were yet living, suffered either death or imprisonment; and 'it is astonishing,' Mr. Godwin thinks, 'that Milton was not made one of the victims in this sanguinary scene, and that the ministers of Charles the second did not consummate their treachery in the extinction of the future author of *Paradise Lost*.'* We might, perhaps, quiet Mr. Godwin's astonishment, by suggesting, that these wicked ministers did not probably anticipate the commission of such a *political* enormity as *Paradise Lost*.

But, why he should be astonished at all, we are at a loss to conceive. He has himself told us, that Milton took no active part in the crimes of the independents; and we learn, from numberless other sources, that he was considered as a person of little consequence during all the time of the commonwealth. He had not imbrued his hands in the blood of his sovereign. He had only offended in his books; and vengeance was taken upon his books, by ordering them to be publicly committed to the flames. As soon as the destruction of the leading rebels had made the royalists secure, they began to feel generous; and Milton, to use the expressive language of Toland, had kept himself hid 'till the worst of the storm was over.' We cannot but admire, indeed, the simplicity of Mr. Godwin, in wondering that 'the future author of *Paradise Lost*' was not hung, when it is so well known that he was not to be found. No sooner had Charles become firmly seated on his throne, than he gave himself up to all the oblivious pleasures, for which his father's court had been so distinguished; and 'some,' says Toland, 'are of opinion, that Milton was more obliged to that prince's forgetfulness than to his clemency.'† It was not, according to Dr. Johnson's round period,

* Godw. Phh. p. 80. † Tol. p. 116.

because he had been 'depressed by fortune and disarmed by nature.' Others were equally depressed by fortune, who yet were not spared; and, so far as Milton was terrible at all, the loss of sight had, by no means, deprived him of his arms. Almost all his invectives against kings and kingship were written after he became blind; and he still possessed the same disposition and strength of mind, with the same keenness and volubility of language.

We have two stories about the mode, in which he is said to have eluded punishment. According to one account, he pretended to be dead, and had a funeral procession; and 'the king,' we are told, 'applauded his policy, in escaping the punishment of death by a seasonable show of dying.'* We know not how to contradict, nor why we should believe, this tale. Again, during the war between the king and parliament, Davenant was taken prisoner, and condemned to death: Milton's intercession is said to have preserved his life; and, when fortune had brought Milton into similar danger, Davenant, it is added, was glad to repay the benefit. 'Here,' says Dr. Johnson, 'is a reciprocation of generosity and gratitude so pleasing, that the tale makes its own way to credit. But, if help were wanted, I know not where to find it.' It was his creed, that 'seldom any splendid story is wholly true;'† and, accordingly, though, a little before, we were told that 'Milton saw himself and his cause in equal danger,' 'it seems not certain,' now, that 'his life was ever in danger.' The story here repeated was first delivered by Richardson; who received it from Pope, as he had it from Betterton, the player. The 'narration,' says Dr. Johnson, 'can be traced no higher;' and we are left to conclude, therefore, that it is altogether unworthy of credit. But it is almost impos-

* Cunningham's Hist. G. B. vol. i. p. 14. Wart. 2d edit. Smaller Poems, p. 358.

† Life of Dorset.

sible, in the nature of things, that the story should be traced any higher. Betterton was set up and patronised by Davenant; was, of course, in habits of intimacy with him; and, unless we are ready to pronounce him a liar, must have derived his account from Davenant himself.*

That Milton's life was at first in danger, we have the clearest evidence. The attorney general was ordered to indict him; and the king, in his proclamation, says, that 'no endeavours used for his apprehension can take effect, whereby he might be brought to legal tryal, and deservedly receive condign punishment for his treasons and offences.'† This proclamation was dated August 13, 1660. Milton was in the hands of the sergeant at arms in December of the same year. But three months had cooled the resentment of his enemies: the act of indemnity had been past; and, on Saturday, Decem. 15, it was ordered, by the house of commons, 'that Mr. Milton, now in custody of the sergeant at arms, be forthwith released, paying his fees.'‡ He had powerful friends in the house; particularly Sir Thomas Clarges, Secretary Morice, and Mr. Andrew Marvel.§ But he struggled to the last: he refused to pay the sergeant's fees; and, both being called before the house, the question was referred to the committee of privileges and elections.‖ How it was determined, we know not.

This is the time for Milton's worshippers to ejaculate their lamentations over his fallen and undone condition; more especially as the time draws near, when the wretchedness of his circumstances will so aptly enhance the glory of his great poetical achievment. Mr. Godwin is chief mourner; and he whines after the following manner: 'Blind—robbed, I suppose, of the principal part of his property—hunted

* Newt. Life of Milt.
† Ap. Tol. p. 113, note.
‡ Ibid. p. 115, note. Todd, vol. i. p. 97.
§ Godw. p. 126. Ph. ap. ibid. p. 378.
‖ Newt. Milt.

out of society—sheltered, according to one account, by the device of a mock-funeral—hidden in a nameless corner from the pursuers of the law—hearing from day to day of the legal insults and murders committed on his dearest friends—surrounded on all sides by the shouts, the acclamations, and the drunken riots of the frantic royalists—apprehended, and at length with difficulty permitted to escape with liberty and life.'* That he was blind, we do not dispute: that he was robbed of his property, Mr. Godwin gratuitously 'supposes:' that he was hunted out of society, is not true: that he was sheltered by the device of a mock-funeral, is only believed for the sake of a climax: that he was hidden in a nameless corner, is a mistatement; for it was Bartholomew Close: that he heard on all sides, and from day to day, such terrific news, is merely a romance; and that he was apprehended, and with difficulty escaped with liberty and life, is only half true; for he voluntarily came forth from his hiding place, under the act of oblivion; and, though for a time in the custody of the sergeant at arms, we hear of no opposition to his final release.

Milton's situation was not half so deplorable as that of many others; and, indeed, this very Mr. Godwin has, in another place, expressed his 'astonishment' at the lenity of his victorious enemies. He was blind, it is true; and, as this was the only particular which distinguished his case from that of his associates, it is exaggerated into a calamity equal to all the rest put together. If Milton had followed a trade, in which his eyes were peculiarly necessary,—if, for instance, he was to handle the pencil or the graver, the loss of sight would have been an inconsolable misfortune: but, as his business was chiefly confined to reflection and composition, he had little use for any other eyes than those of the

* Godw. Phh. p. 127.

mind. It is a little singular, that, while his biographers make so many moans for him, he never utters one for himself; and that, when writing an especial ode upon his own blindness, he feels so little inclined to be sorrowful, that he falls, like Antipater, to making puns. For our own parts, we are willing to take his own words for his feelings;—we will not believe a man wretched when he tells us he is happy. 'Me sortis meæ,' says he to one who taunted him with blindness and imbecility, 'neque piget, neque poenitet. Amici officiosius nunc etiam quam solebant, colunt, observant, adsunt. Neque ego cæcis, afflictis, mocrentibus, imbicillis, *tametsi vos id miserum ducetis*, aggregari me discrucior. Est quoddam per imbecilitatem, præcunto Apostolo, ad maximas vires iter: sim ego debilissimus, dummodo in mea imbicilitate immortalis elle et milior vigor eò se efficacius exerat; dummodo in meis tenebris divini vultus lemen eó clarius elucet; tum enim infirmissimus ero simul et validissimus, cæcus eodem tempore et perspicacissimus.'* We will add a passage from Cicero. 'Democritus,' says he, 'luminibus amissis, alba scilicet, et atra discernere non poterat: at vero bona, mala; æqua, iniqua; honesta, turpia; utilia, inutilia; magna, parva poterat: et sine varietate colorum licebat vivere beate; sine notione rerum non licebat. Atque hic vir,' he adds, what we think equally applicable to Milton, 'impediri etiam animi aciem adspectu occulorum arbitrabitur.'†

But Mr. Godwin has not made Milton wretched enough from his public misfortunes. He must complete the picture by showing a conspiracy among his own children to disturb his quiet, and destroy his happiness. The two eldest daughters, we are told, upon the authority of a nuncupative will, and the annexed depositions, which Mr. Godwin never stops to examine, 'found their favourite relaxation

* Def. Sec. † Tusc. Quæst. l. v. § 39.

in the society of a maid-servant, with whom they combined against their father, and advised her to cheat him with a false account of the marketings. 'They made away,' it is added, 'with some of his books, and would have sold the rest to the dunghill women.'* So cruelly and so incessantly, indeed, is he said to have been annoyed and preyed upon, that he was obliged to marry a third wife, merely to protect himself from the insults and rapacity of his daughters.† And their conduct is represented as peculiarly ungrateful, because, as it is said, in the same documents, Milton expended the 'greatest part of his estate in providing for them;' gave them an excellent education; and, what seems to be thought uncommonly generous, put them out to learn the trade of needlework.‡ That these daughters were guilty of the filial impiety thus laid to their charge, we are not yet prepared to believe. Milton's works are replete with allusions to his domestic affairs; yet we never find him complaining of abuse from any member of his family; and, as to the nuncupative will, upon which the charge is solely founded, we think a brief examination of the circumstances, under which it is said to have been made,—the character of the witness, who attests its authenticity, and the nature and consistency of the facts, which they disclose,—will sufficiently show how little such a document is worthy of credit.

Christopher Milton, as we have said before, was a practiser of law in the Inner Temple; and spent all his vacations at Ipswich. He deposes, that, on the 20th of July, 1674, when on the eve of quitting London, he paid a visit to our poet; who, he says, addressed to him the following words, in a serious manner, as if he intended them for his last will: 'Brother, the portion due to me from Mr. Powell, my former wife's father, I leave to the unkind children I had by her: but I have received no part of

* Godw. Phh. p. 129. † Id. ibid. ‡ Godw. p. 127-8.

it, and my will and meaning is, they shall have no other benefit of my estate, than the said portion, and what I have besides done for them: they having been very undutiful to me. And all the residue of my estate I leave to the disposal of Elizabith, my loveing wife.'* Christopher Milton reduced this testament to writing, the last of November, 1674;† and it is a little singular, we observe, in the first place, that he should have suffered the solemn declaration of what he believed to be his brother's last will to remain more than three months, committed to nothing but the frailty of his own recollection. It is singular, too, that such a man as Milton, when in no more fear of immediate death, than was induced by a usual fit of the gout, should leave his relations to fight over his grave, by giving his last will thus literally to the wind; and the singularity is greatly enhanced, when we come to be told, by the corroborating witnesses, that, though he lived more than three months after making this pretended declaration, he never took any steps to render it more certain, by writing the few lines, in which it might have been embraced; but, almost to the day of his death, continued to cite it as a thing indisputably settled.‡ This is not the conduct of any prudent man. It is a wise rule of law, that no nuncupative will shall be considered as valid, unless it be made in the last sickness of the party; and this will of Milton was, accordingly, set aside, by the prerogative court, in England.§

We have stated but few, however, of the objections, to which it is obnoxious. We do not believe, that Milton's last wife was such an angel as she is represented to have been; and we are afraid, that

* Todd, vol. i. pp. 172-3. These documents were first published by Mr. Warton, in the 2d edition of Milton's Smaller Poems. 1791.
† Todd, vol. i. p. 176.
‡ Todd, as above. Deposition of Elizabeth Fisher.
§ Ibid. pp. 166. 186. Notes.

the integrity of Christopher Milton was not so irrefragable, as one feels predisposed to wish. Richardson says, that Milton's widow was a termagant;* and 'Phillips relates, rather rashly,' as Mr. Warton thinks, 'that she persecuted his children in his lifetime, and cheated them at his death.'† We have no positive testimony to the excellence of her disposition; and, if it should turn out, that she was ready to abuse, or even to defraud, the children of a former wife, we suppose it will not be considered as a very monstrous exception to the usual character of stepmothers.

How she contrived to enlist Christopher Milton in her cause, we could not at first divine; but, when we found, by his own deposition, that, after his return to London, she told him, her husband, whose whole estate amounted to 1500 pounds,‡ had, in his absence, directed her to give him all above 1000,§ we began to think, that her means of seduction were not altogether so contemptible; and that, as he had not, before, any interest in the establishment of such a will, we need not any longer wonder at the tardiness, with which he committed it to paper. He says, it was in 'this Michaelmas terme last past,' that he received the precious information just mentioned;‖ and it was on the 23d of November, that he reduced the will to writing.¶ Michaelmas term begins on the 6th, and ends on the 28th, of November. Milton died on the 8th; and his brother must, therefore, have been in town, two days before that event. If the will was not an afterthought, why was it not attended to within these two days? Why should it be forgotten till the 23d? And why was it, that Christopher Milton, who had hitherto been so excessively neglectful, should, on a sudden, take an active interest in the business, and even

* Rich. Life of Milt. p. 39.
† Todd, vol. i. p. 186, note.
‡ Ph. ap. Godw. p. 381.
§ Todd, vol. i. p. 175.
‖ Id. ibid.
¶ Ibid. p. 176.

lend the widow money to carry on the law-suit?* He undoubtedly expected to get it back with an abundant premium; and, though it would not have done to show his interest directly upon the face of the will, because his testimony would then have lost its force; yet, as it makes the testator give his property,—not simply, as is usual, *to* Elizabeth Milton,—but '*to the disposal* of his loveing wife,' Christopher well knew, that, by thus wording the instrument, the widow, after what she had already told him, could not withhold the surplus 500 pounds, under the pretence of an absolute gift to herself.

We have always thought, that Milton was, at least, a man of magnanimity. This is the account of all his biographers; and even Dr. Johnson quotes the passage of Phillips, in which he says, his uncle was 'of a generous nature, more inclinable to reconciliation than to perseverance in anger and revenge.'† We had thought, too, that the last will of every person was the place to forgive all injuries. Is it probable, then, that such a man as Milton, after remaining silent twenty years, should choose the last, the most solemn, act of his life, to fix an immortal stigma upon the characters of his own offspring? Had the instrument been prolix, and had his displeasure, as is usual in such cases, been inferrable rather from its general tenor, than from any express declaration, there would have been more probability on its side: but here is a will of scarcely a half a dozen lines; and we are called upon to believe, that the malice of Milton was so vindictive, as to tell posterity twice, in so short a space, how ungratefully and unkindly he had been treated by his children. If any thing can heighten the absurdity of this, it is the circumstance, that the testator includes all three of his daughters in the same general curse,—when it

* Todd, vol. i. p. 176. His own deposition.
† Ph. ap. Godw. p. 369.

is known, that the eldest was a cripple, and the youngest a favourite. Anne, the first, not only had an impediment in her speech,—but was rendered completely helpless by the imbecility of her limbs.* Surely it was a strange kind of generosity, that could prompt a man to utter his last breath in a malediction against such a child. Deborah, the youngest, was his amanuensis.† She was the only one of the three, whom he taught to understand Latin;‡ and, when, many years after his death, she was shown one of his portraits, notwithstanding her disinheritance, she burst into exclamations of love, and said, he 'was delightful company, the life of the conversation, and that on account of a flow of subject, and an unaffected cheerfulness and civility.'§ We cannot believe, that such a daughter could have treated her father with irreverence and cruelty;—and it is not our least objection to the genuineness of this will, that no distinction is made between the good and the bad; that all three are embraced in the same unqualified and sweeping sentence of condemnation.

Nor do the witnesses to this instrument contribute to remove our distrust of its authenticity. The first is Maria Fisher, a waiting maid from Bricklane, in Old street; who says, that she was acquainted with Milton about a year before his death; and that, 'on such a day, about noon,' while he and his wife were at dinner, he said, among other things, 'Make much of me as long as I live, for thou knowest I have given thee all when I dye *at thy disposal.*' She adds, that he was, 'at that time, of perfect mind and memory; talked and discoursed sensibly and well; was very merry, and seemed to be in good health of body.'‖ Her sister Elizabeth, she continues, was then in the room with her;—and, ac-

* Todd, vol. i. pp. 176. 184. † Aub. ap. Godw. p. 337.
‡ Id. ibid. § Rich. Notes on Milton, Introd. p. 36.
‖ Todd, vol. i. pp. 177. 180.

cordingly, when Elizabeth comes to give her deposition, she employs, for the most part, precisely the same language.* She says, indeed, that Milton 'was then indisposed in his body by reason of the distemper of the gout, which he had then upon him.'† Yet this, it might be said, is no material difference; for Aubrey tells us, that 'he would be cheerful even in his goute-fitts: and sing.'‡ In the depositions of both witnesses, the time when they heard these things was specified with the same certainty; but, as they did not exactly coincide, in this particular,§ it seems to have been agreed to say nothing about it, in their answers to the interrogatories. Let a witness only stick to generals, and there is little fear of contradiction. Christopher Milton had already said, that the will was delivered 'about noon;'‖ and we cannot help thinking, that Maria and Elizabeth Fisher both used the same vague expression, 'on such a day, about noon,' in order to have us conclude, that, if they could not be supposed to mean the same time with Christopher, they, at least, referred to the same time with each other. But neither of these conclusions will do. Christopher Milton says, that, when the will was given, his brother was in his chamber; and that his wife and servant, Elizabeth Fisher, were 'going up and down the room.'¶ Elizabeth Fisher says, too, that he was in his 'lodging chamber;' but she adds, that, instead of going up and down the room, his wife and himself were sitting at dinner; and that no other person, except herself, was then present.** Maria Fisher, on the contrary, says, that they were at dinner 'in the kitchen;' and that her sister and herself were both present.†† Neither even so much as mention the name of Chris-

* Todd, vol. i. pp. 181. 183. † Id. ibid.
‡ Aub. ap. Godw. p. 346. § Todd, vol. i. pp. 178. 181.
‖ Id. ibid. p. 174. ¶ Id. ibid. p. 173. ** Id. ibid. p. 181.
†† Id. ibid. p. 178.

topher Milton; and it is singular enough, that Elizabeth says, the occasion of the poet's speaking the above words, was, that his wife had procured something for dinner 'which he very well liked,' when all his biographers agree, that he had no choice in his food.

If these stories, therefore, were meant to refer to the same time, they are contradictory; and, if they allude to different times, we shall show, that they are improbable. One would think, from reading these depositions, that Milton did nothing but eat dinner, and remind his wife of his will. Now, even if the will had been reduced to writing, and regularly attested, we cannot think, that he would be eternally ringing it in the ears of his wife. It is not a subject, to which other men delight to recur; more especially, when, like Milton, they are in their mirthful moods. But, when we reflect, that this pretended will was only delivered orally to his brother, and that he lived and 'was merry,' more than three months, after making the declaration, we are not prepared to believe, that he should continue thus to quote and repeat it, without taking any measures to render its provisions more certain. It seems, however, that this was not the only topic, upon which it was his pleasure to dwell. We are to believe, that he descended to be familiar with waiting-maids; and to talk over with them the most delicate circumstances of his private affairs. Thus, he not only lets Elizabeth Fisher into the history of justice Powell's promise of a thousand pounds;* but favours her with the stories, that were told to him, by a former servant, of the undutiful tricks, which his daughters had played.† The nature of these tricks are not calculated to help the improbability. There is nothing absolutely incredible in the tale, that his daughters advised his servants to

* Todd, vol. i. 182. † Id. ibid. p. 183.

cheat him in the marketings; but who will believe, that, when the second was told of his expected new marriage, she answered, it is 'no news to hear of his wedding, but if she could hear of his death, that was something.'* So it might possibly be, that they made way with some of his books; but who can swallow the story, that 'they would have sold the rest to the dunghill-men?' We believe, it is the first time, that ever this class of the community were suspected of being anxious for a library. Maria Fisher had heard nothing against the daughters; and our readers will know how far to credit Elizabeth, when we tell them, in addition to what has already been said, that she was, at the time of her deposition, the servant of Milton's widow, and was produced as a witness on her side of the cause.† Did Milton tell his private griefs to nobody but waiting-maids? Were there not some among his friends, who, if such things had ever fallen from his lips, would have been the more likely to be entrusted with them, and better fitted to establish their authenticity?

We suppose, indeed, that the story here told was not framed without as much basis as is always sufficient for such fabrications. The daughters Milton 'had by his first wife,' says Phillips, 'he made serviceable to him in that very particular in which he most wanted their service, and supplied his want of eyesight by their eyes and tongues. For though he had daily about him some one or other to read to him, some persons of man's estate, who, of their own accord, greedily catched at the opportunity of being his readers, that they might as well reap the benefit of what they read to him, as oblige him by the benefit of their reading, others of younger years sent by their parents to the same end; yet, excusing only the eldest daughter by reason of her bodily in-

* Todd, vol. i. p. 183. † Id. ibid. p. 182.

firmity, and difficult utterance of speech (which, to say the truth, I doubt was the principal cause of excusing her) the other two were condemn'd to the performance of reading, and exactly pronouncing of all the languages of whatever book he should at one time or other think fit to peruse; viz. the Hebrew, (and I think the Syriac,) the Greek, the Latin, the Italian, Spanish, and French. All which sort of books to be confined to read, without understanding one word, must needs be a trial of patience almost beyond endurance; yet it was endured by both for a long time. Yet the irksomeness of this employment could not be always concealed, but broke out more into expressions of uneasiness; so that, at length they were all, even the eldest also, sent out to learn some curious and ingenious sorts of manufacture, that are proper for women to learn, particularly embroideries in gold and silver."*

Can it be, that Milton should thus impose upon his daughters, a task which no human patience could endure, and then charge them with filial ingratitude for at length breaking into expressions of uneasiness? And, after seeing their preparation for future life thus totally neglected, and themselves at length put out to trades beneath their birth and station, must we be told by Mr. Godwin, that 'we are not to suppose he was neglectful of their best interests?"† The first married a carpenter; the second died single; and the third became the wife of a poor weaver, in Spitalfields.‡ We are not among those, who are ready to sacrifice the good name of all others to the reputation of Milton; and, if we have contributed to rescue from infamy the characters of three daughters, who seem to have suffered quite as much sin as they committed, we shall think ourselves sufficiently excused for the prolixity of this examination.

* Ph. ap. Godw. 381. † Godw. Phh. p. 127.
‡ Wart. note at the end of the will, and obs. on Milton's portraits.

The wife, whose conduct has occasioned this digression, was Elizabeth Minshull, of a genteel family, in Cheshire. Milton is said to have married her at the recommendation of his friend Dr. Paget; whose advice he solicited, and who doubtless thought his own kinswoman* would be a fit wife for any body. Milton lived in Germyn-street at the time of this marriage; but he removed, soon after, to a house in the Artillery-walk, leading to Bunhill-fields; which, says Phillips, 'was his last stage in this world.' From his small house in High-Holborn, where we left him, previous to his appointment of Latin secretary, he removed to one Thompson's, next door to the Bull-head tavern, at Charing-Cross; which 'seems to have been a lodging taken,' says his nephew, 'till his designed apartment in Scotland yard' could be prepared for his reception.† For some reason or other, however, he quit his 'apartment' in Scotland yard, for a garden-house in Petty-France, in Westminster, opening into St. James Park; where he remained from 1652 till within a few weeks of the restoration. When he emerged from Bartholomew-close, he took a house in Holborn, near Red Lion Fields; whence he removed, as has been just stated, first to Jewin-street, and then to the Artillery-walk.

As he was now free of public employment, he devoted his whole time to three undertakings, which had been resumed, at every interval of leisure, for the last twenty years of his life;—a *History* of his own country, a *Latin Dictionary*, and an *Epic Poem*. We agree with Dr. Johnson, that, 'to collect a dictionary, seems a work, of all others, least practicable in a state of blindness, because it depends upon perpetual and minute inspection and collation;' and that, 'to compile a history from various authors, when they can only be consulted by other eyes, is

* Ph. ap. Godw. p. 380. † Id. ibid. p. 374.

not easy, nor possible, but with more skilful and attentive help than can be commonly obtained.' Milton, however, was not without examples. We should suppose, that a lawyer, above all men, ought to have eyes; yet the house of Caius Drusus was always filled with clients; who, says Cicero, when they could not see their own way in their affairs, were willing to avail themselves of a blind guide. Cnius Aufidius discharged the office of prætor, delivered speeches in the senate, and wrote a Grecian history, after he had lost his sight. 'Videbat in litteris,' says Cicero. Blind Diodatus, the stoic, resided many years at Cicero's house; and, what is scarcely credible, not only devoted himself to philosophy with more eagerness than ever, played upon the Pythagorian fiddle, and read books day and night,—but, what seems to be absolutely impracticable without eyes, superintended a school of geometry, and would direct his pupils, by words, whence, whither, and how to draw their lines.*

But, whatever might have been Milton's difficulties in compiling a dictionary or a history, it cannot be pretended, that the loss of sight was a serious impediment to the composition of an epic poem. Homer, we are told, was blind. But, when we say this, to use once more the language of Cicero, we look at his picture, and not at his poetry. What region, asks the delighted philosopher, what coast, what corner of Greece, what species of form, what battle, what parade, what contest of oars, what motion of man or of beast, has he not so painted, that, though he may not have seen it himself, he forces his readers to see it?† When Milton commenced *Paradise Lost*,—how he first conceived the idea,—and what was the original celebrity of the poem,—are three questions, which his biographers still strive to illustrate, and continue to discuss.

* Tusc. Quæst. l. v. § 38, et seq. † Id. Ibid.

There is some reason to doubt the saying of Dr. Johnson, that 'he was long choosing, and began late.' Even in a college exercise, written in his 19th year, he expresses his hopes of soaring to the 'door of heaven,' and 'looking in' to see the 'blissful deities;'* and 'it is worth the curious reader's attention,' says Mr. Thyer, one of his commentators, 'to observe how much *Paradise Lost* corresponds with this prophetic wish.' Again, Milton tells Diodati, who had asked him what he was about at his father's, '*πτερόφυω*, et volitare meditor.' In his first religious treatise, of *Reformation*, he says, 'some one may, perhaps, be heard singing hymns and hallelujas in new and lofty measures;' nor does he forget to inform the public, in 1642, that, 'ever since he could conceive himself any thing worth to his country, the intention had lived within him, to celebrate in glorious and lofty hymns the throne and equipage of God's almightiness, and what he works, and what he suffers to be wrought, with high providence in his church; to sing—whatsoever in religion is holy and sublime, in virtue amiable or grave, whatsoever hath passion or admiration of that, which is

* Yet I had rather, if I were to choose,
Thy service in some graver subject use;
Such as may make thee search thy coffers round,
Before thou clothe my fancy in fit sound;
Such, where the deep transported mind may soar
Above the wheeling poles, at Heaven's door
Look in, and see each blissful deity,
How he before the thundrous throne doth lie.

Milton once had a design, it is well known to make prince Arthur the subject of an epic poem. Mr. Warton thinks, that the advice of Manso, the friend of Tasso, first put him upon this design; and Mr. Hayley adds, that the conjecture is not a little strengthened by the fact, that, in Tasso's discourses on epic poetry, Arthur is often recommended as a good hero for a poem. Hayl. p. 254. It was in the ode to Manso, that this design first showed itself; and the above vacation exercise is a proof, that he had long before conceived a different idea.

called fortune from without, or the wily subtilties and refluxes of man's thoughts from within; all these things with a solid and tractable smoothness to point out and describe, teaching over the whole book of sanctity and virtue, through all the instances of example, with such delight, to those especially of soft and delicious temper, who will not so much as look upon truth herself, unless they see her elegantly drest; that whereas the pathes of honesty and good life appear now rugged and difficult, though they be indeed easy and pleasant, they will then appear to all men both easy and pleasant, though they were rugged and difficult indeed.'*

He then proceeds to say, that this thing can only be done 'by devout prayer to that eternal Spirit, who can enrich with all utterance and knowledge, and sends out his seraphim with the hallowed fire of his altar to touch and purify the lips of whom he pleases.'† Here we have nearly the argument and invocation of *Paradise Lost;* and perhaps it is not unworthy of notice, too, that, in speaking of the difficulties, which attend such an undertaking, he uses almost the same language in this prose treatise, and in the poem. He says, in the former, that he shall give no 'certain account of what the mind at home, in the spacious circuits of her musing, hath liberty to propose to herself, though of highest hope and hardest attempting;' and he opens the third book of *Paradise Lost,* with telling us, that he had been 'taught by the heavenly muse to venture' upon the flight of the foregoing books, 'though hard and rare.' So, he talks, in the treatise, of being 'fed with cheerful and confident thoughts;' and, again, in the introduction to the third book of the poem, he 'feeds on thoughts, which move harmonious numbers.' But he has almost told us himself, in so many words, that he began his great epic

* Reas. of Church Gov. Introd. B. II. † Id ibid.

poem before he became a politician; for, after mentioning, as above, what he had been so long determined to do, he adds, that it was 'with small willingness that he endured to interrupt the pursuit of no less hopes than these, to embark in a troubled sea of noise and hoarse disputes.* He would hardly talk of interrupting a pursuit, which had not yet been commenced.

It is remarkable, that all the shorter poems of his early life,—whatever may be the occasion, which called them forth,—are constantly burthened with Phœbus, nightly visitations, Homer, and Virgil; and, in one place particularly, he seems to intimate pretty broadly, that he was about to do what would raise him above both the latter poets. In speaking of what he calls his exile from Cambridge, he says, among other things, 'O that Ovid had suffered no greater calamities than his banishment to Tomas! Every one would not then have been obliged to yield to Homer; nor, conquered Maro! would the first praise be still given to thee!'† That is to say, Milton himself is Ovid in exile; and, if he does not, like Ovid, meet with any heavier misfortunes, he shall do that which those misfortunes prevented Ovid from doing. One is the rather tempted to put this construction upon the words, because the exe-

* Reas. Ch. Gov. Introd. b. ii.

† Eleg. i. ad Diod.

O, utinam vates nunquam graviora tulisset
Ille Tomitano flebilis exul agro;
Non tunc Ionio quicquam cessisset Homero,
Neve foret victo laus tibi prima, Maro.

We may observe here, that, when Milton uses the word *exul*, he does not mean an outcast,—any more than his use of the word *patronus*, for a modern lawyer, conveys all the ideas connected with the original signification of that word:—

Sive decennali fœcundus lite *patronus*
Detonat inculto barbara verba foro.

cution of the sanguine bard at last so completely justified his menaces. He was not alone, however, even at the early period we now speak of, in thinking his own poetical powers superior to those of all his epic predecessors; and it is somewhat remarkable, that, although he had not yet published any thing, which pretended to be a heroic poem, he was uniformly classed, by the Italians, with Homer, Virgil, and Tasso. Selvaggi tells him, for instance, that he is equal to either of the two former; and Salselli says, he is superior to all three.* We can hardly suppose, that such praise was bestowed upon Milton's mask or lyrics; and we were struck with an expression of Dr. Johnson, that 'he *produced* his compositions' to the Italians. We have known instances, in which the doctor has followed the language of a predecessor, without seeming to care about its precise import; and, though in thus using the word 'produce,' he undoubtedly alluded himself to the works of Milton, which had already been published, we suspect, the person, from whom he copied the expression, intended it of such as were still in manuscript. It is idle to suppose, that the Italians knew nothing of his printed poems until he showed them with his own hands; or that Milton would think of travelling over Europe, with an intention to exhibit his own former productions, as the credentials of his respectability. They appeared long before his departure; and he was a rare example of modesty, if he thought, that they had not

* Gracia Mæonidem, jactet sibi Roma Maronem,
Anglia Miltonem jactat utrique parem.

Selvaggi.

Cede, Males; cedat depressa Mincius urna;
Sebetus Tassum desinat usque loqui;
At Thamesis victor cunctis ferat altior undis,
Nam per te Milto, par tribus unus erit.

Salselli.

already been seen on the continent. If he 'produced' any thing, therefore, we think it must have been in manuscript; if it was in manuscript, the sort of praise which he received, renders it likely, that it was part of an epic poem; and, if it was an epic poem, there can be little doubt, that it was *Paradise Lost.*

We are told by Aubrey, indeed, that he began the work about two years before the king was restored; and finished it about three years after.* But we do not rely implicitly upon this statement. Aubrey might easily mistake a resumption for the beginning; and it seems to be agreed, by all the other biographers, that Milton commenced the poem much earlier than the date here assigned, and continued to write it, in detached parcels, as the intervals of public business would permit. Phillips says, he saw some of the verses, in the fourth book, sixteen years before the author went seriously to work at the poem.† He adds, it is true, that they were then designed as the opening of a tragedy; but perhaps this fact may be very naturally accounted for. Nothing is more certain, than that his original intention was to write an epic;‡ and, when he afterwards concluded to run his materials into a tragedy, it was probably because his engagement in public business and political disputes left him no time to undertake a longer work. Then he became a violent enemy to theatres; and would, it is likely, write nothing, which might seem calculated for the stage. His design, therefore, was again changed; and, 'some biographers have supposed,' says Mr. Todd, 'that he began to mould (*re*-mould) *Paradise*

* Ap. Godw. p. 344. † Id. ibid. and Phi. p. 376.

‡ Ress. Ch. Gov. Introd. B. II. 'Whether the epic form, whereof the two poems of Homer, or those other two of Virgil and Tasso, are a diffuse, and the book of Job a brief, model; or whether the rules of Aristotle herein are strictly to be kept, or nature to be followed, &c.

Lost into an epic form, soon after he was disengaged from his controversy with Salmasius.'* Dr. Newton seems to think, that the whole poem was composed after the restoration; and he says, 'considering the difficulties under which the author lay,—his uneasiness on account of public affairs and his own, his age and infirmities, his not being in circumstances to maintain an amanuensis, but obliged to make use of any hand that came next to write his verses as he made them,† it is really wonderful that he should have the spirit to undertake such a work, and much more that he should ever bring it to perfection.' Shall we believe a wonder, or try to account for the fact, upon principles, which belong to this world? For our own parts, we are inclined to think, that some progress was made in *Paradise Lost* during the five years, which the author spent at his father's, immediately after quitting the university; and perhaps it is worth mentioning, that the anonymous French translator of his treatise on *Education* asks, 'Son *Paradis Perdu* n'est il pas l'ouvrage de sa jeunesse.?'‡

We do not, however, place unbounded confidence in this deduction; and still less are we disposed to rely upon that, by which so many persons have endeavoured to show us how and where Milton acquired his first idea. We know not, that criticism can be employed in a more ungrateful office than that of attempting, at the distance of almost two centuries, to ascertain the circumstance, by which a particular thought was suggested to an author's mind. It is by no means probable, that Milton could even have told himself. The seeds of thought are scattered upon us by accident; and we often find ourselves teeming with conceptions, without knowing whence they took root. The fall of Adam is the

* Todd, vol. i. p. 105. † Ph. ap. Godw. p. 876.
‡ Lett. sur L'Educ. des Princes. Paris, 1746. Pref.

first and the greatest event in the history of mankind. It is peculiarly calculated to strike the imagination; and, if, indeed, there be any one subject more likely, than others, to invite the attention, and provoke the efforts, of the poet, it is 'Man's first disobedience and the fruit of the forbidden tree.'* The sagacity of the book hunters has accordingly ferreted out poems and plays concerning Adam and Paradise, in almost all the languages of Europe. Every antiquary produces his own book; and, as the price of discovery, will have it, that Milton's idea could have been derived from no other possible source. Their researches take every different direction; yet all find the author out:—all exclaim, in turn, ευρηκα! ευρηκα!

The first is Voltaire; who, in his *Essay* on epic poetry, published in 1727, has not the least doubt, that we owe *Paradise Lost* to an Italian tragedy, called *Adamo*, which begins with a chorus of angels, 'Let the rainbow be the fiddlestick of the heavens! Let the planets be the notes of our music! Let Time beat carefully the measure, and the winds make the sharps.' There is actually such a book; and it was published, too, more than forty years be-

* Accordingly, the Monke, in Chaucer's Tales, first defines *Tragedie*, and then tells his hearers, that he shall entertain them with a few pieces of that description. His first tragedie is *Lucifer*; the second, *Adam*; and the third, *Samson*. But a still stronger confirmation of our remark, is, that the first theatrical performance, ever written in Europe, was the *Mystery of the Passion*, composed by a pilgrim from the Holy Land, between the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. The rehearsal occupied several days; and, instead of acts, it was divided into *journées*. The example was soon followed; and, the whole of the Old and New Testament was, at length, turned into Mysteries and Moralities. Some of these could not be acted in forty days; and the *Mystery of the Passion* alone, says M. De Sismondi, is equal to all the rest of our tragedies put together. Vol. i. p. 331. During the sixteenth century, more than 1000 comedies were written in Italy; and, from 1500 to 1736, more than 5000 were printed. Ibid. vol. ii. p. 258. Among these, the antiquaries have found some upon the subject of Adam's Fall; and Milton, therefore, say they, could only have drawn his hint from this source!

fore the appearance of *Paradise Lost*. Yet, when Dr. Birch wrote the Life of Milton, so universal a reader as Warburton says, Voltaire's tale is 'all a vision.' Dr. Johnson calls it a 'wild, unauthorized story;' and Mr. Mickle, in the preface to his *Lusiad*, asserts, that the *Adamo* is 'a comedy, which nobody ever saw;' and that even some Italian literati declared their ignorance of any such person as the pretended author. We do not say, that Milton never read so obscure a book: we only say, that these facts do not prove, that he ever did. There is some resemblance, we confess, between the play of Adreini and the intended tragedy of Milton: but the similarity is by no means sufficient to suppose an imitation; and we question, indeed, whether any two different writers, upon the same subject, could help resembling each other as much. There must be Adam and Eve, and the angels, and the devils, in every such performance; and, though both Milton and Adreini have introduced allegorical persons, the different things, which they have respectively chosen to personify, will be sufficient, perhaps, to disprove the supposition of plagiarism.

The second discoverer is Dr. Pearce; who, in his *Review* of Milton's text, says, 'it is probable that he took the first hint of the poem from an Italian tragedy, called *Il Paradiso Perso*;'* which Italian tragedy, however, was never seen by the reviewer, and has subsequently eluded the researches both of Mr. Hayley and of Mr. Todd. Next comes the anonymous editor of the Rev. J. Sterling's works. Milton, we now learn, 'ingenuously confessed, that he owed his immortal work to Mr. Fletcher's *Locustae*;'† a Latin poem, which appeared in 1625; and which, because it contains some lines like Milton's, must necessarily have given rise to *Paradise Lost*. At length, Mr. Lauder makes a discovery equal to

* Rev. Lond. 1733. Pref.

† Pref. Dublin, 1734.

all these three put together. Milton is found to be 'the worst and greatest of all plagiars;'* and we have a list of the authors, to whom he is indebted, with a quotation of the passages, which he more immediately copied. Bishop Douglas has proved, that many of the parallel passages were the result of the critic's own ingenuity; but Milton's blindest worshippers are obliged to confess, that, in many places, he and Grotius thought very much alike. The *Adamus Exul* of the latter was published at the Hague, in 1601.

In 1792, one Baron de Harold was employed, at Dusseldorf, in translating a Latin poem, called the *Christiad;* written by a Carthusian monk in the convent of Newport, near Ostend,—and, in the baron's opinion, not a little the worse for Milton's depredations. It was unlucky, that the *Christiad* was printed at Burges, in 1678; when *Paradise Lost* had been published at least ten years. The *Scena Tragica d'Adamo ed Eva*, a prose drama, by Lancetta, does not labour under the disadvantage of having appeared after the work, of which it is said to have been the occasion. It was published in Venice, in 1644; and, because the address to the reader suggests the fitness of the subject for a heroic poem, Mr. Haley thinks, conjecture will easily infer, that Milton must have proceeded upon that hint. Yet he knows not but 'a sceptical critic' might discountenance the supposition, 'that the poet ever saw a little volume, not published until after his return from Italy, and written by an author so obscure, that his name does not occur in Tiraboschi's elaborate history of Italian literature; nor in the patient Italian chronicler of poets, Quadrio, though he bestows a chapter on early dramatic compositions in prose.'† Mr. Hayley is at liberty to call us 'sceptics,' if it is for disbelieving this. He afterwards proceeds

* Ess. on Milt. Use and Imit. of the Mod. Lond. 1750.
† Hayl. p. 266.

to mention Valvasorie's *Angeleida*, published at Venice, in 1590; Marino's *Struge degli Innocenti*, translated by Crashaw in 1648; together with a number of other Italian poems, of which he never could get a sight.

In 1800, Mr. Dunstar undertook to prove, that the poetry of Du Burtas, a French author, 'contains more material *prima stamina* of Paradise Lost, than any other book whatever: and my hypothesis is,' he adds, 'that it positively laid the corner stone of that *monumentum aere perennius*.'* Du Burtas was translated by Sylvester; and is said to have been a popular book when Milton first began to write poetry.† If *he* laid the first stone, there was many a Spanish and Portuguese poet to assist in the superstruction;—such, for instance, as Antonio Carnazano, who wrote a *Creazione del Mondo*, in 1472; Gasparo Murtola, whose *Poema Sacra*, with the same name, appeared in 1608; Alonzo de Azevedo, who produced another *Creacion*, in 1615; and Luis de Camoens, who, in the same year, gave the world three cantos more, *Da Creaçao et Compolicao do Homem*.‡ We had hoped, that these were the last claimants; but Mr. Todd, too, makes a discovery. Besides ten other Italian poems, which come in for a share, there is *L'Adamo*, written by one Pona, in 1644; from which Milton, we are told, 'acknowledged himself to have received some of his finest hints.' Nor is this the end. *L'Eva*, published by Frederico Malipiero, in 1640, must go hand in hand with *L'Adamo*.‖ And, after all, Mr. Turner thinks, 'there seems much more reason to give the honour to our venerable Cedmon,' an Anglo Saxon author, who wrote a poem on the *Fall of the Angels*, long enough before Milton or his epic was ever thought of.¶ What part of *Paradise Lost* is left for its pretended author, the reader must now determine.

* Considerations on Milton's Early Reading, &c. Lond. 1800.
† Tod. vol. ii. p. 248. ‡ Tod. vol. ii. p. 251.
‖ Id. ibid. p. 254-5. ¶ Pref. Hist. Ang. Sax. Lond. 1799.

We think, we have already proved, that he early conceived an idea of such a poem; and, when he tells us himself, that he 'pursues things unattempted yet in prose or rhyme,' who can believe, that he had seen the cloud of books, that have just been enumerated? Lauder considered it as a mysterious fact,—and Mr. Hayley, for once, is not afraid to think with Lauder,—that Edward Phillips should pass over, in silence, almost all the authors, who have thus been roused from their slumbers.* It is not likely, that poor Edward Phillips ever dreamed of such beings.

Having thus tried to ascertain how *Paradise Lost* came to be written, it is now time to see how it was originally received. It used to be said, that Addison's Criticism gave it the earliest impulse of popularity; and Dr. Johnson, we believe, was the first who undertook to subvert so good a story. 'The slow sale and tardy reputation of this poem,' says he, 'have been always mentioned as evidences of neglected merit, and the uncertainty of literary fame; and inquiries have been made, and conjectures offered, about the causes of its long obscurity and late reception. But, has the case been truly stated? Have not lamentation and wonder been lavished on an evil that never was felt?' He then proceeds to state what few facts his indolence had suffered him to collect; and finally concludes, that the sale of *Paradise Lost*, was, considering all the circumstances, 'an uncommon example of the prevalence of genius.'†

Our readers will now be amused to hear Mr. Godwin scolding at the old moralist, as the original fabricator of the very story, which he thus laboured to discredit. 'I am happy in this place,' says the for-

* Hayl. p. 245.

† This remark was founded upon the supposition, that 1300 copies were sold in the first two years. We shall see, by and by, whether this supposition is warranted by the facts.

mer, 'to have occasion to contradict a wretched fancy of Dr. Johnson, respecting the progress of the character of *Paradise Lost*. Its reputation,' he says, 'still advanced, till the revolution put an end to the secrecy of love, and the poem broke into open view, with sufficient security of a kind reception.'* Three scurrilous lines† are now quoted upon the Doctor; and Mr. Godwin then goes on to disprove, what he calls his 'silly idea'—not by a pertinent deduction of facts and circumstances,—but from the nature of man, in general, and the nature of Englishmen, in particular. 'Man,' he says, 'is not so poor a creature as Dr. Johnson imagines. Englishmen, however debased by the restoration, and the unprincipled politics of Charles the second, were of too generous a frame of spirit, to want to be taught by a king what they should admire, and to wait till a new revolution had unloosed their political fetters, before they should venture to give breath to their approbation. Even Philoxenus, the slave of the Sicilian tyrant, had the virtue to cry out, 'Lead me back to the mines,' rather than lend his voice to the lying commendation of the verses of his master.'‡ This is indignant, and fine, and classical; but it is a most sorry argument *ad hominem*, on this side of the Atlantic; and we must again admire the simplicity of the man, who, to prove that Englishmen praised Milton's verses, shows us, that Philoxenus refused to praise his master's.

The class of writers, to which the Hayleys and the Godwins belong, have conceived so horrid an idea of the iconoclast, who breaks or prostrates so many of their idols, that, partly through fright, and partly through infatuation, they think the destroyer is at hand, whenever their worship is disturbed.

* Godw. Pph. p. 262.

† ———There's no such thing.
It was the slavish temper of his soul
That shaped the baseless notion.

‡ Godw. pp. 262-3.

and, like the bewitched children of Connecticut, cry out 'JOHNSON,' at every thing they see. He is a savage monster, who goes about to devour innocent opinions, trample upon pretty stories, and break up nests of enthusiasts. Systems bow before him; and the flight and howling of the meaner animals, give notice that the mammoth is in the neighbourhood. The dismay is but little diminished, though his bones are now laid in the dust; for, if, as was said of old, 'the den even of an absent lion is to be dreaded,' what must be the terror inspired by the mere haunts of a beast so much more tremendous? We hope the time draws near, when the realms of literature will be rid of this fright; and, when even such writers as Mr. Godwin will acknowledge, that, though Johnson overset many things, which might better have been left standing, he has cleared the ground of much rubbish, and chased away a multitude of idle opinions. Among the rest of his good deeds, we reckon his disproof of the tale which has occasioned these remarks; and, though we do not subscribe to every thing, which he has said upon the subject, a faithful examination of the facts will show, that he was right, at least, in the judgment, which has given such umbrage to Mr. Godwin.

How, in the first place, was a poem, like *Paradise Lost*, likely to be received in the age of the Stuarts? And, secondly, what was its actual reception? For the taste of the times, as it respected religion, we are willing to take Mr. Godwin's own account. 'The character of the two parties who engaged themselves for and against the house of Stuart,' says he, 'is not generally known. The assertors of liberty were not only at war with the encroachments of the princes who succeeded on the death of Elizabeth; they were also adherents of a religious party, called the puritans. In this character, they stood up for a purer form of worship and

a stricter course of moral discipline, and were fervent in their invectives against the relaxations and licentiousness, which, they said, were growing up in the state. This had a singular and an unfortunate effect upon the court. The name of puritan was a familiar appellation for every one that was distasteful to the government; and therefore all that were anxious to be acceptable there, found it expedient to be as unlike puritans as possible. They were afraid of sobriety, decency, and gravity, for these were puritanical qualities.'*

It was 'an age,' says Johnson, 'when he that would be thought a wit, was afraid to say his prayers;'† an age, when, 'if any, out of mere morality and civil honesty,' we are told by Colonel Hutchinson, 'discountenanced the abominations of those days, he was a puritan; and, in short, all that crossed the views of the needie courtiers, the proud encroaching priests, the thievish projectors, the lewd nobility and gentry; whoever could endure a sermon, modest habit or conversation, or any thing good, all these were puritans.'‡ Mr. Godwin says, 'it is curious to observe, that no poet could expect to be allowed to enter under the court standard, till he had written some pieces of gross and shocking indecency; and accordingly,' he adds, 'in the volumes of Carew, of Suckling, of Cleveland, of Denham, there uniformly occurs one or two copies of verses of this description, not written, if we may judge from the general tenor of their works, so much to gratify any inherent depravity of their dispositions, as by way of an oblation offered up to the demon of the times.'§ The puritans exclaimed against the profanity of stage plays. They were acted in defiance, at court, by the queen and ladies of honour. The puritans cried out against the

* Godw. p. 32, 33.
† Joh. Life of Duke.
‡ Hutch. Mem. vol. i. p. 121.
§ Godw. p. 34.

abuse of the Sabbath. The king issued a declaration, setting forth the orthodoxy, and enjoining the indulgence, of sports and refreshments on a Sunday; and the same wholesome doctrine was weekly inculcated from all the loyal pulpits in the kingdom. Were twelve books of the purest and most sublime morality very likely to find readers, in an age when a man must be a libertine, or be nothing?

The literature of the times was quite as hopeless as the religion. The sort of composition, which pleased the court, was a farrago of English absurdity, Italian conceit, and French frivolity. This taste first made its appearance in the reign of queen Elizabeth: time gradually matured and expanded it; and, in the reign of Charles the second, the importation of French modes set off and finished the work. The reader may judge what it must have became at last, by knowing what it was originally. 'In Elizabeth's reign,' says Mr. Scott, 'the court language was formed on the plan of one Lillie, a pedantic courtier, who wrote a book, entitled *Euphues and his England, or the Anatomy of Wit;* which quality he makes to consist in the indulgence of every monstrous and overstrained conceit, that can be engendered by a strong memory and a heated brain, applied to the absurd purpose of hatching unnatural conceits. Our deserved idolatry to Shakspeare and Milton was equalled by that paid to this pedantic coxcomb in his own time. He is called, in the title page of his plays, (for, besides *Euphues*, he wrote what he styled *Court Comedies*,) 'the only rare poet of that time; the witty, comical, facetiously quick, and unparalleled John Lillie.' Moreover, his editor, Mr. Blount, assures us, that 'he sate at Apollo's table; that Apollo gave him a wreath of his own bays, without snatching; and that the lyre he played on had no broken strings.' Besides which, we are informed, 'our nation are in debt for a new English, which he taught them; *Euphues and England* be-

gan first that language. All our ladies were then scholars; and that beauty in court who could not *parle Euphusim*, was as little regarded, as she which now there speaks not French.* In an age, when this taste, in its improved state, was the fashion of the court,—and the court was every thing;—*Paradise Lost* must have been the most heterodox of all imaginable poems. To be caught reading it, must have been literary treason; and literary treason would have been punished with literary death. It was an age of hopping and croaking; and *Paradise Lost* must have dropped upon the world, like the king of the frogs.

It must be needless to observe, that the politics of the court were, if possible, more unpropitious, than either its religion or its literature, to the original celebrity of Milton. There were but two parties in the country,—the royalists, and the puritans. There was no trimming on a middle course. The slightest declination from royalty was considered as a fall into downright puritanism. 'The payment of civil obedience to the king and the laws of the land satisfied not: if any durst dispute his impositions, he was presently reckoned among the seditious and the disturbers of the public peace, and accordingly persecuted: if any were grieved at the dishonour of the kingdom, or the griping of the poor, or the unjust oppressions of the subject, by a thousand ways, he was a puritane: if any gentleman in his country maintained the good laws of the land, or stood up for any public interest, he was a puritane: and, if a puritane, then an enemy to the king and government; a seditious, factious hypocrite, an ambitious disturber of the public peace, and, finally, the pest of the kingdome.'† Milton, in this compre-

* Scott's edition of Dryden's Works, vol. i. p. 7, note.

† Hutch. Mem. as above. These remarks have a more immediate reference to the reign of Charles I.; but, with little variation, they are equally applicable to that of his son, Charles II.

hensive sense of the word, was a puritan of the worst stamp. He had written against kings and kingship, ever since he could write against any thing; and Charles II. had peculiar occasion to remember the man, who had justified the condemnation of his father, and would have been equally ready, perhaps, to justify his own. He may, indeed, have partially forgotten Milton, as he at first kept out of the way: but Lauder says, it was under debate, three days, whether he should suffer with the other regicides; and, though he was at last spared by generosity or forgetfulness, it was his own interest, and the interest of all courtiers, to keep his name from the ears of majesty. Authors of all descriptions must, in those days, bask in the favour of the court, or be nipped for ever; and, indeed, in all ages, 'whither fly the gnats but to the sun?' Those, therefore, who could do Milton any good, were afraid to lisp his name, or to be seen with his works: nearly half of his few public praisers were anonymous; and this very Mr. Godwin, who is so indignant at Dr. Johnson's mention of 'secret love,' has himself told us, that 'the despotism of these times had forced his admirers to perpetuate by the tradition of memory only, or to inculate in the *secrecy* of manuscript copies,' the sonnets to lyriac Skinner, Fairfax, Cromwell, and Sir Henry Vane.* Yet Mr. Godwin's countrymen are never afraid 'to give breath to *their* approbation.'

The very length, and style, and versification, of *Paradise Lost*, were against its original popularity. It was not a time for any thing solid or prolix; and, to people who had no thought but for the present, twelve books of poetry about Adam and Eve were a task beyond endurance. This disadvantage was not at all relieved by the uncourtly manner, in which the author had treated the subject. He had affected

* Godw. p. 278.

obsolete modes of expression; and the whole composition wore such an air of old fashioned formality, as was little calculated to delight a generation of puppets. What greatly enhanced this stiffness, was the author's attempt to imitate Greek and Latin; and we venture to say, that his constant inversions of style rendered the poem utterly incomprehensible to a majority of those, who undertook to read it. But, perhaps its most unpardonable offence was the want of rhyme. Poetry and rhyme were then synonymous terms. Every thing in literature was inverted. The substance was considered as the shadow; the accessary, became the principal; and, so far did the rage extend in poetry, that even a tragedy would hardly be borne, unless it were in rhyme. We do not wonder, therefore, that Milton was called a 'schismatic in poetry;'* or that, when Dryden was praising *Paradise Lost* to one of his acquaintance, he should exclaim, as if it were an insurmountable objection, 'Why, 'tis not in rhyme.'† So concerned was Dryden at this fatal deficiency, that he once asked permission of the author to turn the poem into a rhyming tragedy;‡ and, two years after its publication, it was thought necessary to affix a special advertisement of the reason, 'why the poem rhymes not.'§

Let us see, then, whether the actual reception of *Paradise Lost* was such as might have been anticipated from such a poem, upon such a subject, in such a style, by such an author, and in such an age. We believe, there has been a general mistake, in supposing, that it was not published till 1667. Ellwood, the intimate friend of the author, says, he read a complete copy in 1665;‖ and, while we see no reason why a person, in Milton's circumstances, should delay its publication for two years, it does

* Transposer Rehersed. Ox. 1673. † Richards. Life.
‡ Aub. ap. Godw. p. 339. Scott's Dryd. vol. i. p. 170.
§ Edit. 1668. To the Reader.
‖ Life of himself, 2d edit. Lond. 1714.

not seem to have been generally known, that both Phillips and Toland date the first edition in 1666.* The mistake probably arose from the fact, that the receipt from Simmons, for the copy right, was given the 27th of April, 1667. But, even Mr. Hayley, who adopts the common belief, is yet of opinion, that the poem was originally printed at Milton's own expense;† and, if it was published any time before the copy was sold, what should prevent us from believing, that it appeared a year before? Toland mentions, in the very same page, both the receipt to Simmons, and the date of the first edition; yet he does not even hint, that the two facts have the least connexion with each other. The only circumstances, indeed, which seem to invalidate our supposition, are, that no copy, with the date of 1666, has ever been discovered; and that 'the first edition on the list of the very accurate Mr. Loft was printed in 1667.'‡ When our readers, however, have seen the tricks which were played with the title page, they will need little persuasion to believe, that the interest of the bookseller was sufficient to make him add that of post-dating the original appearance of the volume. It was not his policy to let the public see, that such a work had already been a year in the market; and the fact, that, in the edition of 1667, 'the poem,' as Mr. Todd says, 'immediately follows the title page, without any arguments or list of errata,'§ is a pretty strong proof, that the first leaves of the original impression had been torn out, and a new title page inserted.

We suppose, with Mr. Hayley, that Milton originally printed the book at his own expense; but, finding, that it had few purchasers, and reflecting, that a person, in his situation, was little calculated to find more, he concluded to put the edition into

* Phillips. Godw. p. 378. Tol. p. 121.
† Hayl. p. 178. ‡ Id. ibid.
§ Tod. vol. i. p. 189. List of Editions, No. 5.

the hands of a professed bookseller. The bargain with Simmons was, that the author should receive, at once, *five* pounds; *five* pounds more, upon the sale of each 1300 copies of the first, second, and third edition; and no edition was to comprise more than 1500 copies. The prudence of the bargain was soon manifest; for, by the arts and exertions of the bookseller, the sale of the poem, dilatory as it was, so much exceeded what its original success had led him to anticipate, that he paid the author his second *five* pounds on the 26th of April, 1669. We do not think, with the other biographers, that this second payment is a proof, that 1300 copies had been already disposed of. As the whole number of copies of the first edition amounted to only 1500, and as the second edition was not published till 1674, the supposition, that 1300 were sold from 1667 to 1669, will leave only 200 between 1669 and 1674. We shall be obliged to believe, that more than *sixteen* copies were sold, in the first two years, where *one* could be got rid of, in the five last. We had much rather suppose, that Simmons, finding, that he should make more of his bargain than he, at first, expected, was willing to pay Milton his second *five* pounds by anticipation.

The devices, to which he had recourse, in order to force the circulation of the poem, would do credit to the art of bookselling, even in its present state of perfection. If, as we suppose, the first edition was printed in 1666, the title page was varied six times, in three years; and, if, according to the common belief, it did not appear till 1667, there were no less than five different title pages in two years. In the first, it was 'Paradise Lost, a Poem *written* in Ten Books, by John Milton;' in the second, 'Paradise Lost, a Poem in Ten Books, the author J. M.;' and, in the third, 'Paradise Lost, a Poem in Ten Books, the author John Milton:' but, as this part of the title could not well be varied any more, the two

subsequent editions had the same caption, with sufficient alterations in the type, and a difference in the names of the persons, at whose stores the poem was for sale.* After the third title page, there was an address to the reader, the arguments of each book, and a table of errata. The arguments and table only were retained, in the fourth; and the arguments alone, in the fifth.† That nothing might be wanting to convince the public, that the poem was reprinted at each of the times, when the title was altered, the publisher made a parade of errata in one of his new editions, and had them corrected in the next. We were at a loss, at first, to conceive how this could be done; but Mr. Todd, who had examined the books themselves, afforded us help, by suggesting, that 'some of the leaves were probably cancelled.'‡ Simmons well knew, that readers, in general, are not apt to obey the mandates of a list of errata; and, trusting to the improbability of examination, he even ventured to swell his table with directions to do what was already done.§ This is the manner, in which, to use the language of Johnson, *Paradise Lost* 'forced its way without assistance.' With the help of all these shifts, only 1500 copies were sold in seven years; and, it is almost an insult to tell us, that a poem, which required such artifices, and yet went off so slowly, was 'an uncommon example of the prevalence of genius.'

There are other indications of tardiness, perhaps, equally unequivocal. The first edition was published in 1666; the second, in 1674; the third, in 1678; and the fourth, in 1688.‖ Between the first and last dates, therefore, the public must have been satisfied with only three editions of 1500 copies each; or, in other words, only 4500 copies were sold in twenty-two years. It may be conceded to

* Tod. vol. i. p. 189, 190. List. † Id. ibid.
‡ Vol. i. p. 190. § Id. ibid. ‖ Id. pp. 189, 190.

Dr. Johnson, that 'the call for books was not, in Milton's age, what it is in the present:'* yet it was greater, we apprehend, than he seems inclined to represent it; and, at all events, the difference between the two periods, in this respect, is by no means sufficient to account for so rare an unfrequency of editions, and such an unexampled paucity of sales. Many cotemporary works, both in poetry and in prose, were much more frequently reprinted. Sir Richard Barker's *Chronicle*, continued by Milton's nephew, Edward Phillips, was published twice in four years.† The *Comical History of the Late Times*, written in 1661, by the younger nephew, John Phillips, went through three editions in four years;‡ and 'an immense quarto' book of 830 pages, called *Christian Astrology*, by William Lilly, was twice reprinted in a dozen years.§ It may be thought hardly fair to try poetry with prose; but our readers will acquit us of any wilful unfairness, when we mention, that Blackmore's *Prince Arthur*, another epic in ten books, was published thrice in two years,‖ or more than ten times as often as *Paradise Lost*. Such a poem as the latter would now go through as many editions, in one year, as were

* 'To prove the paucity of readers,' says Dr. Johnson, 'it may be sufficient to remark, that the nation had been satisfied from 1623 to 1664, this is, forty-one years, with only two editions of the works of Shakspeare, which probably did not altogether make one thousand copies.' This only proves that Shakspeare was as unpopular as Milton. It is always mentioned, as a singular circumstance, in the life of the former, that his dramatic merits were never justly estimated, until his works were published by Rowe; and that his cotemporary fame depended almost entirely upon those minor poems, which are now comparatively unknown. Dr. Johnson was no bibliographer; and we must not rely too implicitly upon his enumeration of editions and copies. It may be true, that Shakspeare's entire works were not reprinted but twice in forty years; yet the reader must remember, that, in single plays, they were much more frequently republished. *Romeo and Juliet* was reprinted twice in thirteen years; but, during the same period, *Venus* and *Adonis* and the *Rape of Lucrece*, each went through six editions.—Malone's Supplement, vol. i. p. 575.

† Godw. Phil. pp. 115, 120.

‡ Ibid. p. 105.

§ Ibid. pp. 110, 111.

‖ Joh. Life of Blackm.

actually printed, in twenty; and each edition would probably require twice as many copies as were contained in the first three put together.

Nor do the proofs of its original unpopularity stop here. The first edition was printed in quarto, plainly bound, and cheap; yet, for some reason or other, all the devices and exertions of Simmons did not prevent him from falling to a small octavo in the second.* Milton did not live to receive his third instalment of five pounds; and, in the latter end of 1680,—fourteen years after the first appearance of the poem,—his widow, despairing, it should seem, of living to see 1300 copies sold, parted with her whole right to Simmons for only *eight* pounds. Simmons had already made arrangements to get rid of the work; and his negotiation with the widow was merely to obtain the right from her at a lower price than the one, which he had agreed to take. He sold it to Brabason Aylmer; and, as if it were bank-paper, under par, Aylmer afterwards passed it off to Jacob Tonson.† Simmons never meddled with another of Milton's poems.

We have already seen, that *Paradise Lost* is distinguished as the first work, on which the tactics of bookselling were thoroughly displayed. It has the additional distinction of being the first considerable work, which was ever got off by subscription;‡ and, though, in this instance, the collector of signatures was no less a person than Atterbury, and though the poem had now been before the public more than twenty years, only 500 of Mr. Godwin's *Englishmen* were found to put down their names. We observe,

* Todd, vol. i. p. 109. † Id. ibid. And the other biographers.

‡ Todd, vol. i. p. 112, note. 'Dr. Johnson has said, that Dryden's Virgil was the first considerable work published by subscription. But this edition of *Paradise Lost* (the 4th) preceded the English Virgil some years.' This is said by Mr. Todd, in the midst of an attempt to show, that *Paradise Lost* was altogether too popular to need any such helps.

indeed, that Mr. Godwin really boasts, in loud strains, of this patriotic contribution. 'It was then,' twenty years after its publication,—'It was then, that the recommendation of the rising Somers induced Tonson to enter on the undertaking; it was then that the tory, but tasteful Atterbury, exerted his diligence in collecting subscribers; and it was then, that five hundred Englishmen recorded their names as the zealous supporters of the fame of this great ornament of their native country.'* All which is very eloquent, no doubt; but surely Mr. Godwin might have got better proofs of his darling notion about the original celebrity of *Paradise Lost*. Did it require the 'recommendation' of Somers, and the 'diligence' of Atterbury, to induce a bookseller, so many years after the poem had been published, to undertake a new edition? As to the 'zeal' of the subscribers, we suppose that must be set down to the account of rhetoric. Their 'zealous support' consisted in putting their signatures upon a list, headed with 'names of subscribers—place of residence—number of copies.'

A story was told, by the elder Richardson, respecting the original popularity of this poem, which Mr. Malone has laboured hard to disprove. It was said, on the authority of Sir George Hungerford, that Sir John Denham came into the house of commons, one morning, with a sheet, wet from the press, of *Paradise Lost;* and, when asked what he had there, replied with enthusiasm, 'part of the noblest poem that ever was written in any language or in any age.' Two years afterwards, Lord Burkhurst and Mr. Fleetwood Shepherd were looking at some books, in Little Britain, when they came across *Paradise Lost;* and, being struck with some passages, in turning over the leaves, concluded to purchase it. The bookseller requested his lordship to speak favourably of it, if he could; 'for,'

* Godw. p. 264.

said he, 'the book lies on my hands as waste paper.' When Lord Burkhurst had read the copy, he sent it to Dryden; who soon returned it with the answer: 'This man cuts us all out, and the ancients too.' He afterwards spoke of it in high terms to sir W. L. a north country gentleman; who exclaimed, 'Why, Mr. Dryden, 'tis not in rhyme.' 'No,' replied Dryden, 'nor would I have done my Virgil in rhyme, if I was to begin it again.' Richardson says, that sir W. L. 'told him this thing himself;' and that the anecdote of Lord Burkhurst was derived from Mr. Tancred Robinson, an eminent physician, who had it from Mr. Shepherd's own mouth.*

Mr. Malone's first difficulty is, to conceive, how sir John Denham should get a sheet of the poem wet from the press. Neither the proof nor finished sheets, he says, are 'subject to the inspection of any person but the author, or the persons to whom he may confide them; and there is no evidence or probability, that any intimacy subsisted between sir John Denham and Milton.' It is not likely, that the proofs were 'subject to the inspection' of their blind author, who could have done them little service; and Mr. Malone takes it for granted, that sir John Denham could not have procured a sheet, unless he had himself been entrusted with the whole impression. For our own parts, we can easily conceive, that, being an author himself, and consequently a haunter of printers' shops, he might, in casting his eye over the piles of sheets in the warehouse, or by the side of the press, accidentally light upon a passage he liked; and, expressing his admiration to the bookseller, wanted nothing more than such an assurance of praise, to obtain as many sheets as he pleased. Indeed, conscious of being well known, he might even snatch up a sheet, without ceremony, and carry it off, without leave.

* Richd. Life.

But, in the next place, says Mr. Malone, 'during a great part of the year 1667, when Milton's poem probably was passing through the press, the knight was disordered in his understanding.' There is no evidence, that *Paradise Lost* was passing through the press during the greater part of 1667. It is confessed to have been printed before April, of that year, when Milton sold the copy right; and we think we have proved, that it was put to press some time in the preceding year. Johnson says, that Denham's 'frenzy did not last long:' he died in March, 1668;* and, as Mr. Malone only makes him crazy for a part of 1667, if the poem were printed early in that year, or any time in the year before, the knight may still run a chance of having been in a sane mood at the time. His second marriage is said to have produced his delirium; but it has been more than suggested, that it came and went at his pleasure;† and we may observe, without meaning it as a sarcasm, that there were doubtless many honest people, who would take his extravagant encomium on a nameless book, as a clear proof of his being out of his senses.

This difficulty, then, may be overcome. 'But,' we are told, 'a stronger objection remains behind; for, upon examination, it will be found, that Denham, who is said to have blazoned *Paradise Lost* in the house of commons, was never a member of Parliament.' Mr. Malone might have spared himself this examination; for who said that Denham ever *was* a member of parliament? Richardson merely tells us, that he 'came into the house;' and do none come into the house besides members? It is, also, gratuitously assumed, that Denham 'blazoned' the poem, and 'pronounced his eulogy upon it in a full house of commons.' One would

* Joh. Life of Denh.

† Hamilton's Mem. of Count Grammont. Translated from the French, 2d edit. Lond. 1809.

think Richardson had asserted, that the knight first called the house to order; and then proclaimed, in an audible voice, that he held in his hand a part of the finest poem, that ever was written in any language or in any age. It is further assumed, that the story supposes Dryden never to have seen the poem, till two years after its appearance; and this circumstance is considered as so decisive of Richardson's credit, that Mr. Malone triumphantly puts down a note of admiration. Now, it is not denied, that Dryden may often have seen the poem; but, as he had become an ardent royalist, and as he knew himself to be incessantly watched by a host of enemies, it is not likely, that he durst be caught reading any thing of Milton's, till it had passed through the hands of a nobleman. The account, besides, does not necessarily suppose him to have read it, on this occasion, for the first time. Richardson says, he sent back the poem 'in a short time;' and he might, like many others, have retained his opinion in silence, a year, or two years, before Lord Burkhurst emboldened him to express it. Mr. Malone proceeds to heighten the absurdity, by repeating, with equal triumph, the old story of there having been 1300 copies sold in two years; nor does he perceive, that he runs himself into a much greater absurdity, when he says, 'instead of almost the whole impression lying on the bookseller's hands, 1300 copies out of the 1500 copies of this poem had been already disprised.' This may be a decisive fact to those, who do not stop at believing, that sixteen copies were sold, during the first two years, where one could be disposed of, for the five years following; but, to those, who prefer a less absurdity to a greater, we think it may be safely submitted, whether Mr. Malone has a right to conclude, that 'this anecdote must be rejected as wholly unworthy of credit.'*

* Mal. edit. of Dryd. Lond. 1800. vol. i. p. 112. *et seq.*

It is extremely uncomfortable for Englishmen to believe, that their ancestors did not immediately discern the beauties of a poem, which they now consider as the boast of the nation. Each succeeding biographer and critic, accordingly, thinks himself bound to prove, that it was hailed with abundant praise, both express and implied; and nothing can equal the satisfaction, with which they parade a new witness, with or without name, who has said any thing, for or against *Paradise Lost*. First, there is Edward Phillips, the nephew of the author,—if he did not consider himself as partly the author; for he tells us, 'he had the perusal of the poem from the very beginning for some years, as he went from time to time to visit him, in a parcel of ten, twenty, or thirty verses at a time, which, being written by whatever hand came next, might possibly want correction as to the orthography and pointing.'* It would have been a wonder, indeed, of Edward Phillips had failed to applaud his uncle's performance; and we can only say, that his praise, even in the translation of Mr. Godwin, is given with a great deal more of reserve, than was to have been expected from a person in his situation. The poem 'will receive, if I mistake not,' says he, 'the name of truly heroic, and is adjudged by the suffrages of many, not unqualified to decide such a question, to have reached the perfection of this species of poetry.'† This is the language of a man, who is conscious, that he is speaking against the general voice; and only durst venture into public with his own opinion, under cover of the subjunctive mood. In the original, indeed, it can hardly be called his own opinion. He relies upon those, whom he calls good judges; and tells us, it is *because* they have praised the poem, that he feels inclined to call it truly heroic. 'Vere heroicum, *ni fallor:* plurium *enim* suffragiis, &c.'‡

* Ph. ap. Godw. p. 376. † Godw. p. 145.
‡ Enum. Compend. Poet. ap. Buch. 1669.

The younger nephew, too, must be summoned upon the same side; though he bitterly reviles the author, in one book, and speaks with contempt of his poem, in another. It is enough, that he has mentioned the two names. He will *count;* and may kill his man. In 1676, he wrote a continuation of Heath's *Chronicle;* and, under the date of 1649, he has the following passage upon the man, who enabled him to be so abusive: 'To better the condition of the king our sovereign, Charles the second, as to his kingdom, came forth several defences of his authority in several treatises, especially that of Salmasius, called the *Royal Defence*, (which one Milton, since stricken with blindness, cavilled at, who wrote also against that incomparable book and remains of king Charles the martyr, about this time produced to light, though endeavoured by all means to be suppressed, called Eikon Basilike, in an impudent and blasphemous libel, called Iconaclastes, since deservedly burnt by the common executioner) doth justly challenge to be here registered.'* Under the date of 1664, the burning of books, by the common executioner, is justified upon the same principle, that men may be hanged after they are dead. 'Nor can we omit,' says he, 'the punishment of a criminal book, long after the author's decease. For with the same justice may books, as well as men, be executed for treason.'†

In 1687, the same author translated Don Quixote; and, among numberless other English subjects, he contrives to introduce *Paradise Lost* as one of the books, which Don Diego de Miranda says, his son did not relish. 'He spends whole days in his criticisms,' says Diego, 'whether Homer said well or ill in such a verse of his *Iliads*, whether Martial were bawdy or no in such an epigram, whether such or such a verse in Virgil ought to be understood in

* Ap. Godw. p. 173. † Ibid. p. 174.

this way or that way. He is a great admirer of Horace, Persius, Juvenal, and Tibullus; but of your modern writers he makes small account. Among the rest, he has a particular pique against *Du Burtas* and *Paradise Lost*, which, he says, has neither rhyme nor reason.'* This, says Mr. Godwin, 'is certainly a homage paid at the shrine of Milton's fame. It is not thus that an obscure and inglorious poet will ever be spoken of.'† We suppose, Du Burtas is a renowned and glorious poet; and was, on that account, named before Milton in the same sentence of damnatory praise. Those, at any rate, who are determined not to think, that Du Burtas was 'obscure and inglorious,' will have this decisive fact, and Mr. Godwin's authority, to bear them out.

The next witnesses are Barrow and Marvel; who prefixed laudatory verses to the second edition of *Paradise Lost*. We should like to know, if there was any author, in those days,—whether he wrote in poetry, or prose, upon law, or physic, or divinity, or politics, or any thing else,—who could not find two friends to write a few lines in praise of his book? Had these precious verses even appeared in the first edition, it would have been no proof of merit. It was the fashion of the times to preface all works with such encomiums. Jonson's *Sejanus* called forth eight;‡ and Browne's *Pastorals* had nineteen.§ They were as necessary as a title page; and many a forgotten book has more copies of verses to the first and only edition, than *Paradise Lost* has to the second. Again, we are told by these eulogists, that Dryden wrote a hexastich upon the author; but we are not told, that, reflecting upon the unpopularity of the poem, the same poet once thought to make it better known by 'tagging' it with

* Ap. Godw. p. 259. † Godw. p. 159.
‡ Giff. edit. vol. i. pp. 309—319. § Life of W. Browne.

rhyme.* There is, it seems, a Dr. Woodford, who, in a *Paraphrase upon the Canticles*, published in 1679, has something in praise of *Paradise Lost*.† There is a Samuel Slater, too, who, in the same year, 'was much taken with the learned Mr. Milton's cast and fancy;' though he thought his own 'correcter pen' might improve that 'gentleman's style.'‡ Roscommon cited a passage from *Paradise Lost*, in his *Essay* on Translated Verse, published in 1680.§ An anonymous translator of Jacob Ctesius, in the same year, talks of 'a Cowley, and a Milton.'‖ Sheffield's *Essay* on Poetry, when first printed in 1682, contained some lines, in which Milton was placed below both Torquato and Spencer; but, in a subsequent edition, the names were transposed, and Milton placed above both. The writer of the noblest epic, he says, in the first,

> Must above Cowley, nay and Milton too prevail,
> Succeed where great Torquato, and our greater Spencer fail.

In the second,

> Must above Tasso's lofty flights prevail,
> Succeed where Spencer, and even Milton fail.

In the next year, the *situation of paradise* was 'found out,' by an unknown author; who had occasion to quote some verses from the fourth book of Milton's poem.¶ The first book was translated into Latin in 1685; and, two years afterwards, another nameless author, in a *Poem* to the Memory of Waller, is detected in using the name of Milton.** Atterbury praised him in 1690: a Mr. W. W., in a book upon Ecclesiastes, published in the following year, commends him for rejecting rhyme; and Patrick Hume wrote annotations upon the poem, in 1695.††

* Scot. Dryd. vol. i.
† Todd, vol. i. p. 114.
‡ Todd, vol. i. p. 111.
§ Godw. p. 144.
‖ Todd, vol. i. p. 114.
¶ Id. ibid.
** Ibid. p. 112.
†† Ibid. p. 115.

Mr. Godwin brings in the *Athenian Mercury* as 'paying early honours to *Paradise Lost*;' nor does he seem to consider it as at all an unfavourable circumstance, that this author, twenty-five years after the poem had been published, seriously propounds and discusses the question, whether Waller or Milton was the greatest poet?* In 1694, Charles Gildon, in a volume of *Miscellaneous Letters*, devotes one to the 'Vindication of Mr. Milton's *Paradise Lost*.'† The poem had now been published nearly thirty years; and yet, so little had it exalted the fame of the author, that Gildon can only speak of him under the epithet of *Mr*. Some of the other testimonies offend our ear in the same way; and, indeed, in reading the praises of them all, a modern can hardly help imagining how he should feel, if a person were to tell him, as a piece of information, by the by, that 'this Iliad, by Mr. Homer, is a very fine poem.'

There are two witnesses of a different description. Mr. Godwin considers it as a good omen, that, in 1677, 'the celebrated Thomas Rhymer, the loudest and the fiercest of all the adversaries that ever assailed the reputation of Shakspeare, in his *Tragedies of the Last Age Considered*, threatens shortly to issue from the press, 'some reflections on that *Paradise Lost* of Milton's, which some are pleased to call a poem.'‡ It was now ten years since the poem appeared; and Rhymer probably seeing, that it began to creep slowly towards fame, threatened to spurn it back to its original obscurity. Rhymer and Dennis were critics of the same character; yet Mr. Godwin is in such a strait for testimonies, that the censure of the one, and the praise of the other, are considered as equally honourable to his 'author of *Paradise Lost*.' Dennis published *Letters* on Milton and Congreve, in 1696; and—

* Godw. pp. 288, 289. † Id. ibid. ‡ Ibid. p. 143.

strange to tell—he gave the former his due meed of praise. If we had been to choose the most conclusive argument against the original fame of *Paradise Lost*, perhaps it would have been exactly the fact here stated. When did Dennis ever censure any thing, which was not praised by others? Or, when did he ever praise any thing, which others had not either condemned, or passed by in silence? That he acted from this perversity of motive, on the present occasion, is evident from a passage, afterwards cited by Mr. Godwin, in which he congratulates himself on having given *Paradise Lost* its first start into celebrity. 'I was the first,' says he, 'to do justice to this great pattern of heroic poetry among the moderns, in 1696; and Addison came fifteen years after, and has run away with the honour.'* That such a poem should have needed the praises of either of these competitors, at the distance of thirty or forty years from its publication, is not the least among the proofs of its previous unpopularity.

It would have been better, if these idolaters had not descended to particulars, in endeavouring to persuade us, that *Paradise Lost* was adequately lauded on its first appearance. Had they left the subject in dubious generality, our present veneration for the author might easily have peopled the vacuity with a host of admirers, equally ready, with ourselves, to give the author all honour and praise. But, by attempting to enumerate the testimonies, they have only disclosed the paucity of their numbers, and the general obscurity of their characters. After leaving not a book unturned, which might possibly speak of the poem, and after raking up every person, who has alluded to the name of the author, whether for good, or evil,—only about fifteen writers, learned and unlearned, known and un-

* Ap. Godw. p. 294.

known, inimical and friendly, have been found to mention the one or the other, for a tract of more than thirty years. Four, out of the fifteen, are authors of some celebrity themselves. Four of the remainder are anonymous; and, for any difference of fame or authority, they might all have been so. No person has ever undertaken to collect, in this manner, the evidences of Blackmore's celebrity; but we venture to say, that any diligent man shall get together more persons, who spoke of him and his poems, in one year, than have been found to mention Milton and Paradise Lost, in thirty. Indeed, if, to be much spoken of, is to be famous, we know few authors, who have a fairer chance of immortality, than sir Richard Blackmore. Nor were *his* friends all obscure individuals. Locke praised *Prince Arthur:* Moleneaux admired it;* and sir Edward Haward placed it upon a level with *Paradise Lost.* 'The two elaborate poems of Blackmore and Milton,' said the latter, 'may, for the dignity of them, be well looked upon as the two grand examples of poetry.'†

Mr. Godwin makes much noise, because *Paradise Lost* was rendered into Latin, twenty-four years after it was published. 'There is no species of evidence,' says he, 'that can be more decisive to the character and reception of a poet, than that which is afforded us by Hog's translation into Latin, of *Paradise Lost.*'‡ Now, it unfortunately happens, that, in this 'decisive species of evidence,' sir Richard Blackmore transcends Milton by fifteen years. His *Prince Arthur* was published in 1695; and, five years afterwards, this very Mr. Hog turned the first book into Latin.§ Mr. Southey has said, that Cow-

* Joh. Life of Blackm. † Scot. Dryd. vol. i. p. 100.

‡ Godw. p. 288. Hog never translated the poem at all; though he wrote a paraphrase in 1690. Todd, vol. i. pp. 201, 202. List of Translations. Nos. III. and IV.

§ Ibid. p. 201. No. III. Mr. Godwin might have had a better instance; for the first book of *Paradise Lost* was Latinized in 1686. Id. ibid. No. I.

ley and Cleveland were more popular in their day than Milton;* and we may add, that more than twenty-five years after the publication of *Paradise Lost*, the author had not excited interest enough to call for the least notice of his life, as an introduction to the fourth edition. 'Though the two nephews of the author were yet living,' says Mr. Godwin, 'no bookseller, no subscriber, and no patron conceived the idea of obtaining any sketch of the life, habits, and education of the poet.'† This was said with any thing but an expectation, that it looked to the author's unpopularity; and Mr. Godwin is one of those, who would never forgive a man, for saying, that Milton was not, then, as famous as he is at present. When Dryden died, so many elegiacs were written upon the occasion, in two months, that they were collected and published in a volume.‡ But, 'no muse's tear,' says Mr. Todd, 'was found to grace the obsequies' of his cotemporary, Milton; nor was it till fifteen years afterwards, that an anonymous author, set the example, in a *Propitiatory Sacrifice to the Ghost of J. M.*§ Paradise Lost had now been published twenty-three years; and it is a little remarkable, not only that this nameless poem was expressly designed to appease the ghost of Milton, for the injustice done to his merits;—but that the author should only talk of what his fame was going to be, in future ages.‖ The first monument erected to his memory, was in 1737; the second, in 1793.¶

* South. Specm. of the later Eng. Poets, Lond. 1811. Pref. p. 27.
† Godw. p. 264. ‡ Scot. vol. i.
§ Todd, vol. i. p. 126.

‖ ——The poet's fame shall brighter shine,
In each succeeding age,
Laughing at the baffled rage
Of envious enemies——

¶ Todd, vol. i. p. 141.

We have already said, that the sentence of Johnson, which so grievously offended Mr. Godwin, was, in the main, correct; that, in other words, 'the reputation and price of the copy still advanced, till the revolution put an end to the scenery of love, and *Paradise Lost* broke into open view, with sufficient security of a kind reception.' All know, that the English revolution happened in 1688; and, by comparing the frequency and kind of the editions, before and after that event, we shall see, that the observation is sufficiently warranted by the facts. From 1666 to 1688, there were but three editions. The fourth edition was published in 1688; the fifth, in 1692; and the sixth, in 1695.* Before 1688, therefore, there were but three editions in 22 years;—after that period, we have three editions in seven years:—or the poem was reprinted, after the revolution, more than three times as often as it was before. The first edition was in quarto, with a price of three shillings; but the second and third were in small octavo,† with doubtless a price still lower. The very fact, that the edition of 1688 was a folio, decorated with plates, and priced at ten shillings,‡ would be enough, perhaps, to verify our biographer's remark: but, when it is also considered, that so much more expensive a work was so much oftener reprinted, we think, there can be no doubt, that open justice was never done to the poem, until after the revolution. The honours since paid to it, are not to be enumerated; though Mr. Todd has found *five* translations in Greek; *eleven* in Latin; *six* in Italian; *ten* in French; *eight* in Dutch and German; *one* in Spanish; *one* in Portuguese; and *one* in Russian. Many of these translations, however, are incomplete; and some have never been published.‡

* Todd, vol. i. pp. 189. 192.
† Ibid. p. 191.
‡ Ibid. vol. i. pp. 200—209.

'Thou hast said a great deal upon *Paradise Lost*,' observed Elwood, in returning the manuscript to Milton: 'what hast thou to say upon Paradise Found?' Five years afterwards, the author put into his hands the copy of *Paradise Regained;* and said, in a pleasant tone, 'this is owing to you; for you put it into my head by the question you put to me; which before I had not thought of.' It has been considered, as a great achievement, that this poem was completed in *five* years. Phillips calls it a 'wonderful short space;' though Mr. Dunster, who is by no means insensible to the wonder, has calculated the rapidity of composition at ten lines a day.* A judicious eulogist will never give you the truth in the same sentence with the hyperbole: mankind will still prefer the former; and the contrast merely serves to diminish that admiration, which the latter was intended to augment. Milton must not only write much better verses,—but write them much faster, than any other person; and one of his own Latin epistles is quoted to show, that his industry could never be detached from a subject, until his work was finished. 'Meum sic est ingenium,' says he, 'nulla ut mora, nulla quies, nulla ferme illius rei cura, aut cogitatio distineat, quoad pervadam quo feror, et grandem aliquam studiorum meorum quasi periodum conficiam.'† If to write verses with rapidity, be a mark of pre-eminent genius, the author of *Paradise Regained* might have despaired of celebrity, on that score; for, while Milton would be labouring at his ten lines a day, Lucilius could dictate two hundred in an hour, and without shifting his position.

——— in horâ sæpe ducentos
—— versus dictabat, stans pede in uno.‡

* Dunst. Edit. Par. Reg. Lond. 1795. Mr. Dunster is considered as the Addison of *Paradise Regained.*

† Epist. Tam. No. vi.

‡ Hor. Sat. iv.

Paradise Regained was published in 1671; and Mr. Todd has ascertained, from an old catalogue, that its price, when bound, was two shillings and sixpence.* It has been often said, that the author could never bear to see his second poem placed below the first; but Dr. Newton has furnished his successors with a mode of clearing Milton from an absurdity, which would inevitably render him like other men. We are not to suppose, that such a poet could really think *Paradise Regained* superior to *Paradise Lost;* and, therefore, if he ever manifested any impatience at the dispraise of the former, in comparison with the latter, it was not because he liked the first better than the last,—but because he thought, that, though it was, indeed, the poorest of the two, it was by no means so much the poorest as was commonly imagined. There is no getting rid of a conclusion, which sets out from the assumption, that a man is not to be supposed capable of an absurdity. Phillips was Milton's constant attendant: Elwood was his intimate friend; and they both join in telling us, he 'never could hear with patience any such thing related to him,' as that *Paradise Regained* was pronounced inferior to *Paradise Lost.*† Mr. Todd adds another testimony. 'In a manuscript note,' says he, 'at the end of Toland's *Life* of Milton, communicated to me by Mr. F. G. Waldron, it is related, that *Paradise Regained* was, in the poet's own opinion, the better poem; and that Milton gave this reason for the general dislike, 'that people had a general sense of the loss of paradise, but not an equal gust for the regaining of it.'‡ As Mr. Todd is one of those, who treat the 'popular tale' with contempt, he should not have adduced an anecdote, which proves, at once, that Milton could not only entertain a silly preference himself,—but give a silly

* Todd, vol. i. p. 120, note.
† Ph. ap. Godw. p. 379. Elw. Life.
‡ Todd, vol. i. p. 120, note.

reason for the preference of others. That the saying contains a play upon words, is no disproof of its authenticity; for the works of Milton too frequently show, that he could pun, upon occasion, as well as less divine mortals.

Sampson Agonistes was published at the same time, and in the same volume, with *Paradise Regained.* The biographers are now puzzled, once more, to detect the source of Milton's original idea; but Mr. Hayley is happy enough to discover a *Representatione de Sansone*, per Alesandir Roselli, published at Seina, in 1616.* There seems to be little doubt, that such a work exists; and, though Mr. Hayley himself could never procure a copy, we do not yet despair of seeing it brought to light, and demonstrated to have been the ground-work of Milton's tragedy. Mr. Godwin has a very different theory of its origin. It was 'a subject,' he says, 'no doubt purposely chosen by the author to give vent to the anguish of his heart; a blind servant of God, held captive among the enemies of all true religion, seemed to him an apt type of his own situation.'† This is supposing Milton to have paid a sufficient compliment to himself. But, by whom was he held captive? Where was his prison? And when did he embrace the pillars of the edifice, and pull down equal ruin upon his enemies and himself? Did 'Sampson quit himself like Sampson,' when he submitted to a mock-funeral? Or, when he hid in Bartholomew-close?

But Milton was not always engaged in matters of high argument. From describing the combats of angels 'on the plains of heaven,' he descended to detail the bickerings of the Saxon heptarchy, which he likened to the battles of hawks and kites; and he, who had taught mankind the 'ready and easy way to establish free governments,' did not think it

* Hayl. p. 257, note. † Godw. p. 94.

beneath him to facilitate the progress of children, in acquiring the rudiments of speech, or to assist older scholars in gaining a knowledge of the art of reasoning. His *Accidence commenced Grammar* was published in 1661; and the *Artis Logicæ Institutio*,* in 1672. The *History* of his own country, to the Norman conquest, appeared in 1670. 'On this *History*,' says Dr. Johnson, 'the licenser again fixed his claws; and before he would transmit it to the press, tore out several parts.' He had been too free in the expression of his opinions; and the 'chaplain of the archbishop of Canterbury' could plainly see a masked lampoon upon the modern clergy in Milton's censures of the old Saxon monks. A copy of the unlicensed pages was given to the earl of Anglesea; and he gave them to the world eleven years after the publication of the original work.

In 1673, Milton reprinted his juvenile poems, with his treatise on education; and published a new book upon *True Religion, Heresie, Schism, Toleration, and what best means may be used to prevent the growth of Popery*. Here is certainly a declaration, sufficiently explicit, of the author's hostility to the Catholic religion; and Mr. Todd does not fail to load Titus Oates with two opprobrious names, for saying, not long afterwards, that Milton was the frequenter of a Popish club.† As Oates, in English

* It was adapted to the method of Ramus; and Dr. Johnson, infected a little with the spirit of the licenser, 'knows not whether even in this book, the author did not intend an act of hostility against the universities; for Ramus was one of the first oppugners of the old philosophy, who disturbed with innovations the quiet of the schools.' Every one has his day. Dr. Johnson himself has since been accused of assailing Milton in his *Dictionary*, because, under the article *sonnets*, he adduced, as an instance, the poet's lines upon the abuse of his *Tetrachordon*. Mr. Haley might have produced, from the preface, a proof of hostility still more apparent. After deriving *height* from *high*, he adds, that 'Milton, in zeal of analogy, writes (the first) *highth*; quid te exempta juvat spinis de pluribus una? To change all would be too much, and to change one is nothing.'

† Todd, vol. i. p. 125.

history, is only another name for falsehood, Mr. Todd would have little difficulty in persuading his own countrymen, that this story is altogether without foundation; but he should have reflected, that, in those days, whatever was not on the side of the established church, was considered as under the banners of popery; and that, in another place, he has himself admitted Milton to have instituted a club, for the express purpose of opposing 'Dr. Hammond and other divines of the church of England.'* We are amused with Mr. Godwin's mode of treating this subject. He had read Mr. Todd's Life; and, notwithstanding what we have just seen, he says, 'none of the biographers of the poet have stained their pages with the mention of this title.' Resolving, therefore, to stain his own pages as little as possible, he throws the matter into a note, and handles it thus: 'I know not whether it is proper to notice a scurrilous imputation upon Milton, contained in a silly pamphlet, called the *Secret History of the Calves Head Club*, published in 1703, and that has since been many times reprinted, in which the author of *Paradise Lost* is expressly named as the founder of this club.'† Here is a part of the logic, by which this tale is to be disproved. In the first place, Milton was the 'author of *Paradise Lost*;' and, secondly, Mr. Godwin adds, 'Milton was a man of too much taste, refinement, and humanity,' to take part in any such transactions. We ought, in justice, to observe, that Mr. Todd and Mr. Godwin are at variance as to the object of the club. The former says, it was to oppose the liturgy; and the latter tells us, it was to commemorate the day on which Charles I. was beheaded. It may have been for both purposes; and we might suggest to Mr. Godwin, that the man, who was so forward to justify

* Todd, vol. i. p. 158. † Godw. p. 279, note.

the condemnation of a king,* would not be very slack in celebrating the anniversary of his death.

In 1674, Milton published his *Familiar Letters* in Latin, *Academical Exercises*, and a translation of the Latin *Declaration* of the Poles, in favour of their sovereign, John III. He wrote, also, a *Brief History* of Muscovy, and some other countries eastward of Russia, which was printed in 1682; a *System of Theology*, and an *Answer* to a libel upon himself; both of which seem to have perished. Several other works have been asserted to be his; but Mr. Todd has made us suspect the authenticity of all, except an *Argument* on the militia question, published in 1642.† We are now on the last stage of our journey. Milton died of the gout, on Sunday, the 8th of November, 1674. He had no pain or struggles; and the attendants in the room knew not when he breathed his last. Toland says, his funeral was attended by 'all his learned and great friends in London, not without a friendly concourse of the vulgar.' He was buried by the side of his father in the chancel of St. Giles, Cripplegate; but, when the steps to the communion table were raised in 1679, his grave stone was removed; and, though it may now be impossible to find him, 'I ghesse,' says Aubrey, 'Jo. Speed and he lie together.'‡ In 1790, a body was actually dug up and exhibited as Milton's; but it seems to have been proved, that the skeleton,—so far from belonging to the poet,—was not even of his own sex.§

Milton was a man of about the middle stature; rather spare;‖ and, though well proportioned, so delicate as to have merited the imputation of effe-

* See above, p. 47 † Todd, vol. i. pp. 127. 132.

‡ Aub. ap. Godw. p. 346, 347. § Todd, vol. i. p. 139.

‖ Aub. ap. Godw. p. 337. The reader may be amused to see how an antiquarian takes notes. 'He was,' says Aubrey, 'scarce so tall as I am. [Qu. quot feet tall am I? Resp. of middle stature.']

minacy. His face was oval; and his light brown hair parted on his forehead, and fell down upon his shoulders. His eyes were grey; his features regular; and his skin so fine and fresh, that, as he tells us himself, strangers generally took him to be ten years younger than he was. He has spoken of his own 'honest haughtiness and self-esteem;' and his biographers tell us, that his deportment was at once affable, erect, and manly.

It has been even thought worth while to trace a history of his portraits. The first was a half-length, taken by Cornelius Jansen, in 1619. It was left in the possession of Milton's widow; but afterwards fell into the hands of Mr. Charles Stanhope; and, at the sale of that gentleman's pictures in June, 1760, was purchased by Mr. Thomas Hallis. Mr. Stanhope bought it of the widow's executors, for twenty guineas: Mr. Hallis gave thirty; and was so elated with his bargain, that, when lord Harrington applied to have the lot returned, he said, 'his lordship's whole estate should not repurchase it.' His lodgings in Covent Garden afterwards took fire; and, without attempting to rescue any other part of his furniture, he took this picture under his arm, and, as if his all was saved, walked calmly out of the house. Mr. Warton thinks, it is now in the possession of Mr. Band Hallis. J. B. Cipriani engraved it in 1769.

There was another picture in the possession of the widow, which, says Mr. Warton, some have suspected not even to have been a portrait of Milton. If it be the one mentioned by Aubrey, it is, notwithstanding this suspicion of the connoiseurs, the only good likeness ever taken. Vertue, who engraved the picture, says, it was drawn at the age of twenty-one; and Mr. Warton acknowledges, that 'the ruf is much in the neat style of painting rufs, about and

before 1628.'* Milton was at the university in 1628; and Aubrey tells us, that 'his widow has his picture drawn (very well and like) when a Cambridge scholar;—which,' he adds, 'ought to be engraven; for the pictures before his books are not *at all* like him.'† He says afterwards, that Milton 'wrote his name on his picture with his widow to preserve;'‡ and Mr. Warton quotes this passage, without seeming to be aware, that a more conclusive disproof of his opinion could not well be imagined.

The next portrait, by Marshall, was prefixed to the author's juvenile poems, published in 1645. It seems to have been no likeness; or, at any rate, Milton was angry with it. The fourth was drawn in crayons by Farthorne, in 1670; and, as the likeness was attested by the poet's youngest daughter, it is now considered as the only faithful portrait. When Peck was about to publish his *New Memoirs* of Milton, in 1740, he obtained a portrait from Sir John Meres, of Leicestershire, and asked Vertue, if he thought it was a likeness. Vertue did not think it was. 'I'll have a scraping from it, however,' answered Peck; 'and let posterity settle the difference.' Posterity has considered it as an easy task. Peck said, the likeness was taken when Milton was twenty-five; and yet, that the whole transaction might be of a piece, his 'scraping' represents the poet with his hand on *Paradise Lost*. This was the forerunner of a long line of scrapings; and even Sir Joshua Reynolds bought, in 1784, a picture for Milton, which, to the no small confusion of the artist, was generally pronounced to be a good likeness of Selden. But, as Sir Joshua had once thought it to be Milton's, and had moreover given a hundred guineas for his purchase, he was not to be

* Ap. Todd, vol. i. p. 142, note. All the *learning* on the subject may be found in this note.

† Aub. ap. Godw. p. 337.

‡ Ibid. p. 345

driven from his opinion; and one item of his will gives to the Rev. William Mason, 'the miniature of Milton by Cooper.'

The domestic habits of Milton have been ascertained with sufficient minuteness. He rose at four, in the morning; had some one to read the Hebrew Bible to him for about half an hour; contemplated till seven; read and wrote until dinner; walked or swung, and played music, three or four hours; entertained visiters until eight; took a light supper; smoked his pipe; drank a glass of water; and went to bed. He was a great lover of music; and not only sang and played on the organ or bass-viol himself,—but impressed his wife and nephews into the service. He did not regard music as merely an amusement, designed to please the ear, or to compose the soul. He made its influence extend to the body; and seems to have considered it as peculiarly fitted to aid nature in the process of digestion. Thus, in his treatise on *Education*, he not only thinks, boys should 'recreate and compose their travailed spirits,' before dinner, 'with the solemn and divine harmonies of music;' but adds, that 'the like also would not be inexpedient after meat, to assist and cherish nature in her first concoction, and send their minds back to study in good tune and satisfaction.'

He never drank strong liquors; and seldom drank any at all, between meals. He is said to have been extremely pleasant in his conversation; though somewhat given to satire. Dryden told Aubrey, that he pronounced the letter R very hard; and added, that it was a certain sign of a satirical wit.* He seems always to look upon females with contempt; and, though he was a loud advocate for freedom in commonwealths, he never showed any dislike of despotism in families. He dictated to his amanuensis, sitting obliquely in an elbow-chair, with

* Aub. ap. Godw. p. 338.

one leg over the arm; and Richardson says, 'he used to sit in a grey coarse cloth coat, at the door of his house in Bunhill-fields, in warm sunny weather, to enjoy the fresh air; and so, as well as in his room, received the visits of people of distinguished parts and quality.'

He took no great care of his pecuniary concerns. He lent his personal estate to the parliament during the civil wars; and, when the contest was over, he asked for repayment, and met with rebuke. His appointment to the Latin secretaryship was doubtless considered a part of his reward. He had two hundred pounds a year for that office; and received a thousand pounds for his *Defence of the People*. His widow said, he was defrauded of 2000 pounds, which he had intrusted to a scrivener; and of 2000 more, which had been placed in the excise office. An estate of sixty pounds is said to have been his share in the spoils of the church; but he was equally unfortunate, whether he gave or received; for this was, of course, taken from him at the restoration. 'There is yet no reason to believe,' says Dr. Johnson, 'that he was ever reduced to indigence.' If he intended to have us believe this, he should not have subjoined, immediately after, that Milton 'sold his library before his death.' It is true, that he left 1500 pounds to his family; but perhaps it is quite as unquestionable, that the greater part of the sum resulted from the sale of his books.

His library was probably numerous; for it is agreed by all, that his literature was great. He informs us himself, that his life was a 'ceaseless round of study and reading;' and his works every where proclaim, that he did not become master of the Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Italian, French, and Spanish languages, merely for the sake of the accomplishment. He would repeat almost the whole of Homer; and, after him,

* Rich. Life, p. 4.

Ovid and Euripides were his favourites, in the learned languages. 'Of the latter,' says Mr. Todd, 'he is said to have been a reader, not only with the taste of a poet, but with the minuteness of a Greek critic. His Euripides, in two volumes, Paul Steven's quarto edition of 1602, with many marginal emendations in his own hand, is now the property of Mr. Cradock, of Grunly, in Leicestershire. Of these notes, some have been adopted by Joshua Barnes, and some have been lately printed by Mr. Jodrell.'* Dr. Johnson inspected the same book; but he does not seem to have considered it as such a 'treasure.' 'His Euripides,' says the latter, 'is, by Mr. Cradock's kindness, now in my hands: the margin is sometimes noted; but I have found nothing remarkable.'

Among the English poets, Spencer, Shakspeare, and Cowley are said to have been the most frequently in Milton's hands. 'Spencer,' says Dr. Johnson, 'was apparently his favourite; Shakspeare he may easily be supposed to like, with every other skilful reader; but I should not have expected that Cowley, whose ideas of excellence were so different from his own, would have had much of his approbation.' An attentive reader of the two poets will make a different discovery. The minds of Cowley and Milton were alike, in many respects; and the earlier poems of the latter, more particularly, are marked with not a little of the metaphysics and conceit, which Dr. Johnson has so well described in the life of the former. Milton was fond of giving names to certain classes of writers. Thus, declamatory authors were styled *Fustianists;* and Dryden merited his contempt, because he herded with what Milton had nicknamed the *Rhymists*.

He had a capacious memory; and was much more inclined to give his own experience and reflection to the world, than to waste his time in translating

* Todd, vol. i. pp. 152-3.

the experience and reflection of others. 'I never,' says he, 'could delight in long citations, much less in whole traductions; whether it be natural disposition or education in me, or that my mother bore me a speaker of what God made mine own, and not a translator.' According to Richardson, his 'poetical faculty rushed suddenly upon him, with an impetus or œstrum, and his daughter was immediately called to secure what came.' 'That, in his intellectual hour,' says Johnson, 'Milton called for his daughter to secure what came, may be questioned; for it unluckily happened to be known, that his daughters were never taught to write; nor would he have been obliged, as is universally confessed, to have employed any casual visiter in disburthening his memory, if his daughter could have performed the office.' Now, it unluckily happens to be known, that, in addition to the direct testimony of Aubrey, Richardson, and others, the manuscript of Milton, in Trinity College, Cambridge, is written in different female hands; and that, in August, 1786, a gentleman published some lines, evidently Milton's, which were written, in a female hand, on two blank leaves prefixed to a copy of the original edition of *Paradise Lost*, and subscribed with the words 'Dictated by J. M.'*

* Gent. Mag. Aug. 1786, p. 698.

ON DAY-BREAK.

Welcome, bright chorister, to our hemisphere;
Thy glad approaches tell us day is near.
See! how his early dawn creeps o'er yon hill,
And with his grey-eyed light begins to fill
The silent air, driving from our sight
The starry regiment of frighted Night.

* * * * *

O Thou, who sometimes by most sacred voice,
Father of Light wert styl'd, let my free choice
(Though all my works be evil, seldom right,)
Shun loving darkness rather than the light.

Biographers have been considerably puzzled to find what name should be given to Milton's piety. He was not ostensibly a member of any particular church; and, though he so frequently represents our first parents in prayer, he never was detected in praying himself. Some call him a presbyterian; others, a Brownist. He is now a quietist; and now, a quaker. In this dilemma, Dr. Johnson consoles himself with reflecting, that, 'to belong to no church, is dangerous;' but others are not contented, till they have discovered, in his writings, some conformity with a known denomination of Christian doctrines. Elwood, a quaker, was his most intimate friend; and the following passage, from a cotemporary gazette, will show, that Milton lived, for a time, in the vicinity of the quakers' meeting-house:

'August 31, 1657. Mr. John Lilburne, (commonly known by the name of Lieut. Col. Lilburne,) dying on Saturday at Eltham, was this morning removed thence to London, and his corpse conveyed to the *house* called the *Mouth*, at ALDERSGATE, which is the usual meeting-place of the people called quakers, to whom it seems he had lately joined in opinion. At this place, that afternoon, assembled a medley of people, among whom the quakers were

Let thy essential brightness, with quick glance,
Dart through the foggy mist of ignorance,
Into the darken'd intellect, and thence dispel
Whatever clouds o'erspread the sense;
Till, with illuminated eyes, the mind
All the dark corners in itself can find,
And fill them all with radiant light, which may
Convert my gloomy night to sunshine day.
Though dark, O God! if guarded by thy might
I see with intellectual eyes; the night
To me a noontide blaze, illumin'd by
The glorious splendours of thy Majesty!

This is merely a poetical translation of the passage cited above, p. 67.

most eminent for number; and within the house a controversy was, whether the ceremony of a herse-cloth should be cast over his coffin; but the major part, being quakers, not assenting, the coffin was, about 5 o'clock in the evening, brought into the street. At its coming out, there stood a man on purpose to cast a velvet herse over the coffin, and he endeavoured to do it; but the crowd of quakers not permitting it, and having gotten the body upon their shoulders, they carried it away without further ceremony, and the whole company are directed to Moorfields, and thence to the new church adjoining Bedlam, where it was interred.'*

There were some articles of Milton's faith, which, for want of a better term, we may call superstitions. 'An opinion wanders about the world,' says Dr. Johnson, 'and sometimes finds reception among wise men; an opinion, which restrains the operations of the mind to particular regions, and supposes that a luckless mortal may be born in a degree of latitude too high or too low for wisdom or for wit. From this fancy, wild as it is,' he adds, 'Milton had not wholly cleared his head, when he feared lest the climate of his country might be too cold for flights of imagination.'† We are afraid this opinion still wanders about the world; and we are very sure, that Dr. Johnson's own countrymen have never received the lesson, which he thus taught them. If, among the countless absurdities, which Englishmen have said of this country, it were worth while to name one thing more absurd than the rest, it would be, that, from the cold mists of their own island, they should charge the climate of America with stupifying genius, and abridging life. We have long

* Cromwelliana, p. 168. † Par. Lost, b. ix.

——unless an age too late, or cold
Climate or years, damp my intended wing
Depress'd.

known how to congratulate ourselves upon living under a sky thus stigmatised; but it was not till the publication of a recent work, by an Englishman himself, that we could fully estimate our title to self-congratulation. He tells us, that the Novembers of America are more pleasant than the Junes of England; and he is constantly breaking into such expressions as, 'Here is a month of October!' 'What a November for an Englishman to see!'

Another thing which disquieted our bard, was, a fearful suspicion, that his lot had been cast in an age too late for the acquisition of epic renown. This idea, again, Dr. Johnson had a right to ridicule; but he need not have treated it quite so gravely as all this: 'General causes,' says he, 'must operate uniformly in a general abatement of mental power; if less could be performed by the writer, less likewise would content the judges of his work. Among this lagging race of frosty grovellers, he might still have risen into eminence by producing something which they should not willingly let die. However inferior to the heroes, who were born in better ages, he might still be great among his cotemporaries, with the hope of growing every day greater in the dwindle of posterity. He might still be great among the pigmies, the one-eyed monarch of the blind.' This was certainly intended to be very consoling; but, if we could suppose Milton to have gone thus far, what should prevent him from taking another step, by reflecting, that, though his own littleness might seem great to his cotemporaries, the greatness of Homer must become colossal in the same eyes? that, if his own age should look upon him as a giant, they must regard Homer as a god? He must know, that, while the dwindle of posterity might every day increase his own stature, it would still leave antiquity as high as ever; and, when mankind should have shrunk into pigmies, would they not still behold, above himself, the only poet, who

would be entitled to hold the sceptre over the one-eyed monarchy of the blind?

Another notion seems to have taken possession of Milton's head, or rather the heads of his biographers, concerning the subserviency of his mind to the vicissitudes of the seasons. It was not enough, that, like ordinary mortals of other trades and callings, he should find times, when his hand was out. He must be subjected to superior influences. The mind of Milton could only be regulated by the same laws, which govern the equinoxes. Richardson talks of his 'sudden impetus or œstrum;' and Phillips says, 'his vein never happily flowed but from the autumnal equinoxial to the vernal.'* Milton himself seems to have had a different opinion; and Toland was the first to remark, that, in his Ode to Spring, he unfortunately hails that very season, as the time, when his strength and genius returned. 'To this it is answered,' says Johnson, 'that Phillips could hardly mistake time so well marked; and it may be added, that Milton might find different times of the year favourable to different parts of life.' The Doctor was determined to laugh at the thing, in his own way; and did not, therefore, observe, that Milton had precluded the supposition of his alluding to other parts of life, by inviting the return of strength expressly for the composition of verses.

> Fallor? an et nobis redeunt in carmina vires,
> Ingeniumque mihi munere veris adest?

Perhaps the politics of Milton have been sufficiently developed in the course of this narrative. He was one of the first writers, who began to shake the belief of Christendom, in the divinity of regal power, and the infallibility of an established church. Bossuet, indeed, has given the credit to a different per-

* Ph. ap. Godw. 367.

son; and perhaps Englishmen, in these days of *Legitimacy*, are not generally aware, that, while they attribute the disturbance of their favourite doctrine to a modern Frenchman, it was long ago imputed, by Frenchmen themselves, to one of the most legitimate, because one of the most tyrannical, English monarchs, that ever sat upon a throne. The havoc made by Henry the eighth, in the religious and political establishments of his empire, is considered as the great cause of the divisions, which have since distracted both church and state. God was willing, says Bossuet, that mankind should, for once, be turned loose, in order to let them see, by the confusion and violence which must ensue, how much better it had been, if they could only have remained quiet. 'Il voulait découvrir par un grand example tout ce qui peut l'héresie, combien elle est naturellement indocile et INDEPENDENT, *combien fatale à la royauté, et tout antorité* LEGETIME.'

It was natural, that this spirit of independence, when first escaped from the cavern, should rush over the earth, with indiscriminate fury. The earlier advocates of free government had no distant views beyond the subversion of present establishments. The old edifices were first to be prostrated: and, without calculating what should be erected on their ruins, it was thought enough for one generation to pull down and lay waste. Indeed, so far as their object can be ascertained at all, perhaps the class of writers, to which Milton belongs, had little fear for mankind, if they were once set free from the present bondage of laws and authority. The insolence of despotism had brought the very name of government into discredit; and those, who resolved to bear the burthen no longer, could see no distinction between licentiousness and independence,—and thought, that, to be free, it was only necessary to be lawless. This spirit, in all its excess, is still to be found among the visionaries of political philo-

sophy; and we suppose, a certain fellow feeling with the genius of Milton may, in part, have induced Mr. Godwin to enter upon a literary undertaking, for which, we think, he has shown himself peculiarly unfitted.* It is certainly the leading tenet of this

* Whatever may be his merits as a writer of romances or of political essays, we suspect, he will never succeed as a critic of poetry. We know, Mr. Godwin has a right to be pleased with what gives us no pleasure at all; but there are certain subjects, upon which the decision of time has confirmed the preference of taste; and, when a man sets up his own judgment in opposition to such a sentence, he does not disagree with a single individual,—but contradicts the whole world. It was hardly to have been expected, at this time of day, that a man should deliberately tell the readers of poetry how vastly superior the *Homer* of Chapman is to that of Pope, and how infatuated they must be to prefer Dryden's *Virgil* to Phaer's. Yet all this is done by Mr. Godwin. He even places the parallel passages by the side of each other; and calls upon the public to observe how the old translations rise above the new. We shall not forbid him this mode of appeal; and our readers are to understand, therefore, that the subjoined specimens are taken from passages, which Mr. Godwin repeatedly calls wonderful. The subversion of Troy is thus described by Phaer:—

Then verily right abroad I saw whole Ilion castle sinke
In fires, and upside down all Troy from bottom turn'd to brinke.

Virgil's description of Æneas' lamentation is thus given:—

———That in my *parlour* fires
Mine enemies I must see to kill *my folke*,
Ascanius my child, my wife Creusa, my father olde,
All *sprawling* slaine.

It seems, that Numaus was of the order of knighthood:—

———Then with a sound from deadly bowe
The swift shaft whistling fled, and thro' *Sir* Numaus' temples twain
It grisly shake.

We hear of the 'Trojan Fort;' and the Sun says to Ascanius, 'that's my peerless lad.' But the cap-sheaf is still behind. 'How magnificent,' exclaims Mr. Godwin, 'is the address of Ascanius to the Spring-old Euryalus!'

But, as for thee, *O Lad*, to whom my years do creep,
Thou reverent *stately child*, how deep in breast I thee receive.
Thou ever art my mate.

gentleman, that all the crimes and vices of mankind may be traced to the laws, with which they have, in some way or other, contrived to hamper themselves. He seems, at one and the same time, to have the worst, and the best, opinion of mankind. He heartily despises them for tolerating such things as laws and authority; and yet he has no doubt, that they are noble and virtuous enough to keep society in order, by their own mere sense of right and wrong. It is the laws, which make them villains; for, were there no laws to break, would there be any crimes to punish? But, perhaps, the reader will better catch the spirit of his philosophy, from the following passage, in the book, which we have had such frequent occasion to cite.

'Nothing,' says he, 'can be more odious to a liberal mind, than the practice which unhappily takes place, in some degree, in all courts of justice, of measuring the words of the persons arraigned before them, and requiring them to speak in what is called, 'the manner befitting their unhappy situation.' The insolence of the judges, the delight they apparently feel in interrupting, in checking, in rebuking, in trampling upon, the prisoners brought before them, which we more or less perceive in the reading of all trials, certainly conduces to none of the ends of justice. They expect to be emphatically thanked for their generosity, if they practice any degree of decency towards the man whose cause they are appointed to hear, and if they consent to put him to death with any sort of gentility. They look for a canting and hypocritical profession of offence and of sorrow; and hold out a lure, often a fallacious one, that such professions shall be considered in mitigation of punishment. They are more anxious to degrade and dishonour, than to inflict the censure of the law. If a man fairly asserts his own conception of his case, and refuses to acknowledge offence, where, whatever may be the judg-

PARADISE REGAINED.

IN FOUR PARTS.

VOL. VII.

THE

FIRST BOOK

OF

PARADISE REGAINED.

THE ARGUMENT.

The Subject proposed. Invocation of the Holy Spirit.—The Poem opens with John baptizing at the river Jordan. Jesus coming there is baptized; and is attested, by the descent of the Holy Ghost, and by a voice from Heaven, to be the Son of God. Satan, who is present, upon this immediately flies up into the regions of the air: where, summoning his Infernal Council, he acquaints them with his apprehensions that Jesus is that seed of the Woman, destined to destroy all their power, and points out to them the immediate necessity of bringing the matter to proof, and of attempting, by snares and fraud, to counteract and defeat the person, from whom they have so much to dread. This office he offers himself to undertake; and, his offer being accepted, sets out on his enterprise.—In the mean time God, in the assembly of holy Angels, declares that he has given up his Son to be tempted by Satan; but foretels that the Tempter shall be completely defeated by him:—upon which the Angels sing a hymn of triumph. Jesus is led up by the Spirit into the wilderness while he is meditating on the commencement of his great office of Saviour of Mankind. Pursuing his meditations he narrates, in a soliloquy, what divine and philanthropic impulses he had felt from his early youth, and how his mother Mary, on perceiving these dispositions in him, had acquainted him with the circumstances of his birth, and informed him that he was no less a person than the Son of God; to which he adds what his own in-

quiries and reflections had supplied in confirmation of this great truth, and particularly dwells on the recent attestation of it at the river Jordan. Our Lord passes forty days, fasting, in the wilderness: where the wild beasts become mild and harmless in his presence. Satan now appears under the form of an old peasant; and enters into discourse with our Lord, wondering what could have brought him alone into so dangerous a place, and at the same time professing to recognize him for the person lately acknowledged by John, at the river Jordan, to be the Son of God. Jesus briefly replies. Satan rejoins with a description of the difficulty of supporting life in the wilderness; and entreats Jesus, if he be really the Son of God, to manifest his divine power, by changing some of the stones into bread. Jesus reproves him, and at the same time tells him that he knows who he is. Satan instantly avows himself, and offers an artful apology for himself and his conduct. Our blessed Lord severely reprimands him, and refutes every part of his justification. Satan, with much semblance of humility, still endeavours to justify himself; and professing his admiration of Jesus and his regard for virtue, requests to be permitted at a future time to hear more of his conversation; but is answered, that this must be as he shall find permission from above. Satan then disappears; and the Book closes with a short description of night coming on in the desert.

PARADISE REGAINED.

BOOK I.

I, who erewhile the happy garden sung
By one man's disobedience lost, now sing
Recover'd Paradise to all mankind,
By one Man's firm obedience fully tried
Through all temptation, and the Tempter foil'd
In all his wiles, defeated and repuls'd,
And Eden rais'd in the waste wilderness.
  Thou Spirit, who ledst this glorious eremite
Into the desert, his victorious field,
Against the spiritual foe, and brought'st him thence,
By proof the' undoubted Son of God, inspire,
As thou art wont, my prompted song, else mute,
And bear, through height or depth of Nature's bounds,
With prosperous wing full sum'd, to tell of deeds
Above heroic, though in secret done,
And unrecorded left through many an age;
Worthy to' have not remain'd so long unsung.
  Now had the great Proclaimer, with a voice
More awful than the sound of trumpet, cried
'Repentance, and Heaven's kingdom nigh at hand

To all baptiz'd.' To his great baptism flock'd
With awe the regions round, and with them came
From Nazareth the son of Joseph deem'd
To the flood Jordan; came, as then obscure,
Unmark'd, unknown; but him the Baptist soon
Descried, divinely warn'd, and witness bore
As to his worthier, and would have resign'd
To him his heavenly office; nor was long
His witness unconfirm'd; on him baptiz'd
Heaven open'd, and in likeness of a dove
The Spirit descended, while the Father's voice
From Heaven pronounc'd him his 'belov'd Son!'
That heard the Adversary, (who, roving still
About the world, at that assembly fam'd
Would not be last) and, with the voice divine
Nigh thunder-struck, the' exalted Man, to whom
Such high attest was given, a while survey'd
With wonder; then, with envy fraught and rage,
Flies to his place, nor rests, but in mid air
To counsel summons all his mighty peers,
Within thick clouds and dark ten-fold involv'd,
A gloomy consistory; and them amidst,
With looks aghast and sad, he thus bespake:
'O ancient Powers of air, and this wide world,
(For much more willing I mention air,
This our old conquest, than remember Hell,
Our hated habitation,) well ye know
How many ages, as the years of men,
This universe we have possess'd, and rul'd,
In manner at our will, the' affairs of earth,
Since Adam and his facile consort Eve
Lost Paradise, deceiv'd by me; though since
With dread attending when that fatal wound
Shall be inflicted by the seed of Eve

Upon my head. Long the decrees of Heaven
Delay, for longest time to him is short;
And now, too soon for us, the circling hours
This dreaded time have compass'd, wherein we
Must bide the stroke of that long-threaten'd wound,
(At least if so we can, and by the head
Broken be not intended all our power
To be infring'd, our freedom and our being,
In this fair empire won of earth and air,)
For this ill news I bring, the Woman's Seed,
Destin'd to this, is late of Woman born.
His birth to our just fear gave no small cause:
But his growth now to youth's full flower, displaying
All virtue, grace, and wisdom to achieve
Things highest, greatest, multiplies my fear.
Before him a great Prophet, to proclaim
His coming, is sent harbinger, who all
Invites, and in the consecrated stream
Pretends to wash off sin, and fit them, so
Purified, to receive him pure, or rather
To do him honour as their king: all come,
And he himself among them was baptiz'd;
Not thence to be more pure, but to receive
The testimony' of Heaven, that who he is
Thenceforth the nations may not doubt; I saw
The Prophet do him reverence; on him, rising
Out of the water, Heaven above the clouds
Unfold her crystal doors; thence on his head
A perfect dove descend, (whate'er it meant)
And out of Heaven the sov'reign voice I heard,
'This is my Son belov'd, in him am pleas'd.'
His mother then is mortal, but his Sire
He who obtains the monarchy of Heaven:
And what will he not do to' advance his Son?

His first-begot we know, and sore have felt,
When his fierce thunder drove us to the deep:
Who this is we must learn, for Man he seems
In all his lineaments, though in his face
The glimpses of his Father's glory shine.
Ye see our danger on the utmost edge
Of hazard, which admits no long debate,
But must with something sudden be oppos'd,
(Not force, but well-couch'd fraud, well-woven [snares,)
Ere in the head of nations he appear,
Their king, their leader and supreme on earth.
I, when no other durst, sole undertook
The dismal expedition to find out
And ruin Adam; and the' exploit perform'd
Successfully: a calmer voyage now
Will waft me; and the way, found prosperous once,
Induces best to hope of like success.'

He ended, and his words impression left
Of much amazement to the' infernal crew,
Distracted and surpris'd with deep dismay
At these sad tidings; but no time was then
For long indulgence to their fears or grief:
Unanimous they all commit the care
And management of this main enterprise
To him, their great dictator, whose attempt
At first against mankind so well had thriv'd
In Adam's overthrow, and led their march
From Hell's deep-vaulted den to dwell in light,
Regents, and potentates, and kings, yea gods,
Of many a pleasant realm and province wide.
So to the coast of Jordan he directs
His easy steps, girded with snaky wiles,
Where he might likeliest find this new-declar'd,
This Man of men attested Son of God,

Temptation and all guile on him to try;
So to subvert whom he suspected rais'd
To end his reign on earth, so long enjoy'd:
But, contrary, unweeting he fulfill'd
The purpos'd counsel, pre-ordain'd and fix'd,
Of the Most High; who, in full frequence bright
Of Angels, thus to Gabriel smiling spake:
'Gabriel, this day by proof thou shalt behold,
Thou and all Angels conversant on earth
With man or men's affairs, how I begin
To verify that solemn message, late
On which I sent thee to the Virgin pure
In Galilee, that she should bear a son,
Great in renown, and call'd the Son of God;
Then told'st her, doubting how these things could be
To her a virgin, that on her should come
The Holy Ghost, and the power of the highest
O'ershadow her. This Man, born and now upgrown,
To show him worthy of his birth divine
And high prediction, henceforth I expose
To Satan; let him tempt, and now assay
His utmost subtlety, because he boasts
And vaunts of his great cunning to the throng
Of his apostasy: he might have learnt
Less over-weening, since he fail'd in Job,
Whose constant perseverance overcame
Whate'er his cruel malice could invent.
He now shall know I can produce a Man,
Of female seed, far abler to resist
All his solicitations, and at length
All his vast force, and drive him back to Hell;
Winning, by conquest, what the first man lost,
By fallacy surpris'd. But first I mean
To exercise him in the wilderness;

There he shall first lay down the rudiments
Of his great warfare, ere I send him forth
To conquer Sin and Death, the two grand foes,
By humiliation and strong sufferance:
His weakness shall o'ercome Satanic strength,
And all the world, and mass of sinful flesh,
That all the Angels and ethereal Powers,
They now, and men hereafter, may discern,
From what consummate virtue I have chose
This perfect Man, by merit call'd my Son,
To earn salvation for the sons of men.'

So spake th' Eternal Father, and all Heaven
Admiring stood a space, then into hymns
Burst forth, and in celestial measures mov'd,
Circling the throne and singing, while the hand
Sung with the voice, and this the argument:

'Victory and triumph to the Son of God,
Now entering his great duel, not of arms,
But to vanquish by wisdom hellish wiles!
The Father knows the Son; therefore secure
Ventures his filial virtue, though untried,
Against whate'er may tempt, whate'er seduce,
Allure, or terrify, or undermine.
Be frustrate, all ye stratagems of Hell,
And, devilish machinations, come to nought!'

So they in Heaven their odes and vigils tun'd:
Meanwhile the Son of God, who yet some days
Lodg'd in Bethabara, where John baptiz'd,
Musing, and much revolving in his breast,
How best the mighty work he might begin
Of Saviour to mankind, and which way first
Publish his godlike office, now mature,
One day forth walk'd alone, the Spirit leading
And his deep thoughts, the better to converse

With solitude, till, far from track of men,
Thought following thought, and step by step led on;
He enter'd now the bordering desert wild,
And, with dark shades and rocks environ'd round,
His holy meditations thus pursued:

'O, what a multitude of thoughts at once
Awaken'd in me swarm, while I consider
What from within I feel myself, and hear
What from without comes often to my ears,
Ill sorting with my present state compar'd!
When I was yet a child, no childish play
To me was pleasing; all my mind was set
Serious to learn and know, and thence to do
What might be public good; myself I thought
Born to that end, born to promote all truth,
All righteous things: therefore, above my years,
The law of God I read, and found it sweet,
Made it my whole delight, and in it grew
To such perfection, that, ere yet my age
Had measur'd twice six years, at our great feast
I went into the temple, there to hear
The teachers of our law, and to propose
What might improve my knowledge or their own;
And was admir'd by all: yet this not all
To which my spirit aspir'd; victorious deeds
Flam'd in my heart, heroic acts; one while
To rescue Israel from the Roman yoke,
Then to subdue and quell, o'er all the earth,
Brute violence and proud tyrannic power,
Till truth were freed, and equity restor'd:
Yet held it more humane, more heavenly, first
By winning words to conquer willing hearts,
And make persuasion do the work of fear;
At least to try, and teach the erring soul,

Not wilfully misdoing, but unaware
Misled; the stubborn only to subdue.
These growing thoughts my mother soon perceiving,
By words at times cast forth, inly rejoic'd,
And said to me apart, "High are thy thoughts,
O Son! but nourish them, and let them soar
To what height sacred virtue and true worth
Can raise them, though above example high;
By matchless deeds express thy matchless sire,
For know, thou art no son of mortal man;
Though men esteem thee low of parentage,
Thy father is th' Eternal King, who rules
All Heaven and earth, Angels and sons of men;
A messenger from God foretold thy birth
Conceiv'd in me a virgin; he foretold,
Thou should'st be great, and sit on David's throne,
And of thy kingdom there should be no end.
At thy nativity, a glorious quire
Of Angels, in the fields of Bethlehem, sung
To shepherds, watching at their folds by night,
And told them the Messiah now was born;
Where they might see him; and to thee they came,
Directed to the manger where thou lay'st,
For in the inn was left no better room:
A star, not seen before, in Heaven appearing,
Guided the wise men thither from the east,
To honour thee with incense, myrrh, and gold;
By whose bright course led on they found the place,
Affirming it thy star, new-graven in Heaven,
By which they knew the King of Israel born.
Just Simeon and prophetic Anna, warn'd
By vision, found thee in the temple, and spake,
Before the altar and the vested priest,
Like things of thee to all that present stood."—

This having heard, straight I again revolv'd
The Law and Prophets, searching what was writ
Concerning the Messiah, to our scribes
Known partly, and soon found, of whom they spake
I am; this chiefly, that my way must lie
Through many a hard assay, ev'n to the death,
Ere I the promis'd kingdom can attain,
Or work redemption for mankind, whose sins
Full weight must be transfer'd upon my head.
Yet, neither thus dishearten'd or dismay'd,
The time prefix'd I waited; when behold
The Baptist, (of whose birth I oft had heard,
Not knew by sight,) now come, who was to come
Before Messiah, and his way prepare!
I, as all others, to his baptism came,
Which I believ'd was from above; but he
Straight knew me, and with loudest voice proclaim'd
Me him, (for it was shown him so from Heaven,)
Me him, whose harbinger he was; and first
Refus'd on me his baptism to confer,
As much his greater, and was hardly won:
But, as I rose out of the laving stream,
Heaven open'd her eternal doors, from whence
The Spirit descended on me like a dove;
And last, the sum of all, my Father's voice,
Audibly heard from Heaven, pronounc'd me His,
Me 'His beloved Son, in whom alone
He was well pleas'd;' by which I knew the time
Now full, that I no more should live obscure,
But openly begin, as best becomes
Th' authority which I deriv'd from Heav'n.
And now by some strong motion I am led
Into this wilderness, to what intent
I learn not yet; perhaps I need not know,
For what concerns my knowledge God reveals.'

So spake our Morning-Star, then in his rise,
And, looking round, on every side beheld
A pathless desert, dusk, with horrid shades;
The way he came not having mark'd, return
Was difficult, by human steps untrod:
And he still on was led, but with such thoughts
Accompanied of things past and to come
Lodg'd in his breast, as well might recommend
Such solitude before choicest society.
Full forty days he pass'd, whether on hill
Sometimes, anon on shady vale, each night
Under the covert of some ancient oak
Or cedar, to defend him from the dew,
Or harbour'd in one cave, is not reveal'd;
Nor tasted human food, nor hunger felt
Till those days ended; hunger'd then at last
Among wild beasts: they at his sight grew mild,
Nor sleeping him nor waking harm'd; his walk
The fiery serpent fled and noxious worm,
The lion and fierce tiger glar'd aloof.
But now an aged man in rural weeds,
Following, as seem'd, the quest of some stray ewe,
Or wither'd sticks to gather, which might serve
Against a winter's day, when winds blow keen,
To warm him wet return'd from field at eve,
He saw approach, who first with curious eye
Perus'd him, then with words thus utter'd spake:
'Sir, what ill chance hath brought thee to this [place
So far from path or road of men, who pass
In troop or caravan? for single none
Durst ever, who return'd, and dropt not here
His carcass, pin'd with hunger and with drouth.
I ask the rather, and the more admire,
For that to me thou seem'st the man, whom late
Our new baptizing Prophet at the ford

Of Jordan honour'd so, and call'd thee Son
Of God: I saw and heard, for we sometimes
Who dwell this wild, constrain'd by want, come forth
To town or village nigh, (nighest is far)
Where aught we hear, and curious are to hear,
What happens new; fame also finds us out.'
To whom the Son of God:—'Who brought me hither,
Will bring me hence; no other guide I seek.'
'By miracle he may, (replied the swain)
What other way I see not; for we here
Live on tough roots and stubs, to thirst inur'd
More than the camel, and to drink go far,
Men to much misery and hardship born:
But, if thou be the Son of God, command
That out of these hard stones be made thee bread,
So shalt thou save thyself, and us relieve
With food, whereof we wretched seldom taste.'
He ended, and the Son of God replied:
'Think'st thou such force in bread? Is it not written,
(For I discern thee other than thou seem'st)
Man lives not by bread only, but each word
Proceeding from the mouth of God, who fed
Our fathers here with manna? In the mount
Moses was forty days, nor eat, nor drank;
And forty days Eljah, without food,
Wander'd this barren waste; the same I now:
Why dost thou then suggest to me distrust,
Knowing who I am, as I know who thou art?'
Whom thus answer'd the Arch-Fiend, now undis-
'Tis true I am that Spirit unfortunate, [guis'd:
Who, leagu'd with millions more in rash revolt,
Kept not my happy station, but was driven
With them from bliss to the bottomless deep,

Yet to that hideous place not so confin'd
By rigour unconniving, but that oft,
Leaving my dolorous prison, I enjoy
Large liberty to round this globe of earth,
Or range in the' air; nor from the Heaven of Heavens
Hath he excluded my resort sometimes.
I came among the sons of God, when he
Gave up into my hands Uzzean Job
To prove him and illustrate his high worth;
And, when to all his angels he propos'd
To draw the proud king Ahab into fraud
That he might fall in Ramoth, they demurring,
I undertook that office, and the tongues
Of all his flattering prophets glib'd with lies
To his destruction, as I had in charge;
For what he bids I do. Though I have lost
Much lustre of my native brightness, lost
To be belov'd of God, I have not lost
To love, at least contemplate and admire,
What I see excellent in good, or fair,
Or virtuous; I should so have lost all sense:
What can be then less in me than desire
To see thee and approach thee, whom I know
Declar'd the Son of God, to hear attent
Thy wisdom, and behold thy godlike deeds?
Men generally think me much a foe
To all mankind: why should I? they to me
Never did wrong or violence; by them
I lost not what I lost, rather by them
I gain'd what I have gain'd, and with them dwell,
Copartner in these regions of the world,
If not disposer; lend them oft my aid,
Oft my advice by presages and signs,
And answers, oracles, portents, and dreams,

Whereby they may direct their future life.
Envy they say excites me, thus to gain
Companions of my misery and woe.
At first it may be; but, long since with woe
Nearer acquainted, now I feel, by proof,
That fellowship in pain divides not smart,
Nor lightens aught each man's peculiar load.
Small consolation then, were man adjoin'd:
This wounds me most, (what can it less?) that Man,
Man fall'n, shall be restor'd, I never more.'
To whom our Saviour sternly thus replied:
'Deservedly thou griev'st, compos'd of lies
From the beginning, and in lies wilt end;
Who boasts release from Hell, and leave to come
Into the Heaven of Heavens: thou com'st indeed,
As a poor miserable captive thrall
Comes to the place where he before had sat
Among the prime in splendour, now depos'd,
Ejected, emptied, gaz'd, unpitied, shun'd,
A spectacle of ruin, or of scorn,
To all the host of Heaven: the happy place
Imparts to thee no happiness, no joy,
Rather inflames thy torment; representing
Lost bliss, to thee no more communicable,
So never more in Hell than when in Heaven.
But thou art serviceable to Heaven's King.
Wilt thou impute to' obedience what thy fear
Extorts, or pleasure to do ill excites?
What but thy malice mov'd thee to misdeem
Of righteous Job, then cruelly to' afflict him
With all inflictions? but his patience won.
The other service was thy chosen task,
To be a liar in four hundred mouths;
For lying is thy sustenance, thy food.

Yet thou pretend'st to truth; all oracles
By thee are given, and what confess'd more true
Among the nations? that hath been thy craft,
By mixing somewhat true to vent more lies.
But what have been thy answers, what but dark,
Ambiguous, and with double sense deluding,
Which they who ask'd have seldom understood,
And not well understood as good not known?
Who ever by consulting at thy shrine
Return'd the wiser, or the more instruct,
To fly or follow what concern'd him most,
And run not sooner to his fatal snare?
For God hath justly given the nations up
To thy delusions; justly, since they fell
Idolatrous: but, when his purpose is
Among them to declare his Providence
To thee not known, whence hast thou then thy truth,
But from him, or his Angels president
In every province, who, themselves disdaining
To' approach thy temples, give thee in command
What, to the smallest tittle, thou shalt say
To thy adorers? Thou, with trembling fear,
Or like a fawning parasite, obey'st:
Then to thyself ascrib'st the truth foretold.
But this thy glory shall be soon retrench'd;
No more shalt thou by oracling abuse
The Gentiles; henceforth oracles are ceas'd,
And thou no more with pomp and sacrifice
Shalt be inquir'd at Delphos, or elsewhere;
At least in vain, for they shall find thee mute.
God hath now sent his living oracle
Into the world to teach his final will,
And sends his Spirit of truth henceforth to dwell
In pious hearts, an inward oracle

To all truth requisite for men to know.'
So spake our Saviour; but the subtle Fiend,
Though inly stung with anger and disdain,
Dissembled, and this answer smooth return'd:
'Sharply thou hast insisted on rebuke,
And urg'd me hard with doings, which not will
But misery hath wrested from me. Where
Easily canst thou find one miserable,
And not enforc'd oft-times to part from truth,
If it may stand him more in stead to lie,
Say and unsay, feign, flatter, or abjure?
But thou art plac'd above me, thou art Lord;
From thee I can, and must, submiss, endure
Check or reproof, and glad to 'scape so quit.
Hard are the ways of truth, and rough to walk,
Smooth on the tongue discours'd, pleasing to the' ear,
And tuneable as sylvan pipe or song;
What wonder then if I delight to hear
Her dictates from thy mouth? Most men admire
Virtue, who follow not her lore: permit me
To hear thee when I come, (since no man comes)
And talk at least, though I despair to' attain.
Thy Father, who is holy, wise, and pure,
Suffers the hypocrite or atheous priest
To tread his sacred courts, and minister
About his altar, handling holy things,
Praying or vowing; and vouchsaf'd his voice
To Balaam reprobate, a prophet yet
Inspir'd: disdain not such access to me.'
To whom our Saviour, with unalter'd brow:
'Thy coming hither, though I know thy scope,
I bid not, or forbid: do as thou find'st
Permission from above; thou canst not more.'

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* Aub. et sup. p. 1
† Todd, vol. i. p. 17

BOOK

EGAINED.

He added not; and Satan, bowing low
His gray dissimulation, disappear'd,
Into thin air diffus'd: for now began
Night with her sullen wings to double-shade
The desert; fowls in their clay nests were couch'd;
And now wild beasts came forth the woods to roam.

END OF BOOK I.

THE

SECOND BOOK

OF

PARADISE REGAINED.

THE ARGUMENT.

The Disciples of Jesus, uneasy at his long absence, reason among themselves concerning it. Mary also gives vent to her maternal anxiety: in the expression of which she recapitulates many circumstances respecting the birth and early life of her Son.—Satan again meets his Infernal Council, reports the bad success of his first temptation of our Blessed Lord, and calls upon them for counsel and assistance. Belial proposes the tempting of Jesus with women. Satan rebukes Belial for his dissoluteness, charging on him all the profligacy of that kind ascribed by the poets to the Heathen Gods, and rejects his proposal as in no respect likely to succeed. Satan then suggests other modes of temptation, particularly proposing to avail himself of the circumstance of our Lord's hungering; and, taking a band of chosen Spirits with him, returns to resume his enterprise.—Jesus hungers in the desert.—Night comes on; the manner in which our Saviour passes the night is described.—Morning advances.—Satan again appears to Jesus, and after expressing wonder that he should be so entirely neglected in the wilderness, where others had been miraculously fed, tempts him with a sumptuous banquet of the most luxurious kind. This he rejects, and the banquet vanishes.—Satan, finding our Lord not to be assailed on the ground of appetite, tempts him again by offering him riches, as the means of acquiring power: This Jesus also rejects, producing many instances of great actions performed by persons under virtuous poverty, and specifying the danger of riches, and the cares and pains inseparable from power and greatness.

PARADISE REGAINED.

BOOK II.

Meanwhile the new-baptiz'd, who yet remain'd
At Jordan with the Baptist, and had seen
Him whom they heard so late expressly call'd
Jesus Messiah, Son of God declar'd,
And on that high authority, had believ'd,
And with him talk'd, and with him lodg'd; I mean
Andrew and Simon, famous after known,
With others though in Holy Writ not nam'd;
Now missing him, their joy so lately found,
(So lately found, and so abruptly gone,)
Began to doubt, and doubted many days,
And, as the days increas'd, increas'd their doubt.
Sometimes they thought he might be only shown,
And for a time caught up to God, as once
Moses was in the mount and missing long,
And the great Thisbite, who on fiery wheels
Rode up to Heaven, yet once again to come:
Therefore, as those young prophets then with care
Sought lost Elijah, so in each place these
Nigh to Bethabara, in Jericho
The city of palms, Ænon, and Salem old,
Machærus, and each town or city wall'd

On this side the broad lake Genezaret,
Or in Peræa; but return'd in vain.
Then on the bank of Jordan, by a creek,
Where winds with reeds and osiers whispering play,
Plain fishermen, (no greater men them call)
Close in a cottage low together got,
Their unexpected loss and plaints out breath'd:
'Alas, from what high hope to what relapse
Unlook'd for are we fall'n! our eyes beheld
Messiah certainly now come, so long
Expected of our fathers: we have heard
His words, his wisdom full of grace and truth;
Now, now, for sure, deliverance is at hand,
The kingdom shall to Israel be restor'd;
Thus we rejoic'd, but soon our joy is turn'd
Into perplexity and new amaze:
For whither is he gone, what accident
Hath rapt him from us? will he now retire
After appearance, and again prolong
Our expectation? God of Israel!
Send thy Messiah forth, the time is come;
Behold the kings of the' earth, how they oppress
Thy chosen: to what height their power unjust
They have exalted, and behind them cast
All fear of thee; arise, and vindicate
Thy glory; free thy people from their yoke.
But let us wait; thus far he hath perform'd,
Sent his Anointed, and to us reveal'd him
By his great Prophet, pointed at and shown
In public, and with him we have convers'd;
Let us be glad of this, and all our fears
Lay on his Providence; he will not fail,
Nor will withdraw him now, nor will recal,

Mock us with his blest sight, then snatch him hence;
Soon we shall see our Hope, our Joy, return.'
Thus they, out of their plaints, new hope resume
To find whom at the first they found unsought:
But to his mother Mary, when she saw
Others return'd from baptism, not her son,
Nor left at Jordan, tidings of him none, [pure,
Within her breast though calm, her breast though
Motherly cares and fears got head, and rais'd [clad:
Some troubled thoughts, which she in sighs thus
'O, what avails me now that honour high
To have conceiv'd of God, or that salute,
"Hail highly favour'd, among women bless'd!"
While I to sorrows am no less advanc'd,
And fears as eminent, above the lot
Of other women, by the birth I bore;
In such a season born, when scarce a shed
Could be obtain'd to shelter him or me
From the bleak air; a stable was our warmth,
A manger his; yet soon enforc'd to fly
Thence into Egypt, till the murderous king
Were dead, who sought his life, and missing fill'd
With infant blood the streets of Bethlehem;
From Egypt home return'd, in Nazareth
Hath been our dwelling many years; his life
Private, unactive, calm, contemplative,
Little suspicious to' any king; but now,
Full grown to man, acknowledg'd, as I hear,
By John the Baptist, and in public shown,
Son own'd from Heaven by his Father's voice,
I look'd for some great change; to honour? no,
But trouble, as Old Simeon plain foretold,
That to the fall and rising he should be
Of many in Israel, and to a sign

Spoken against, that through my very soul
A sword shall pierce: this is my favour'd lot,
My exaltation to afflictions high;
Afflicted I may be, it seems, and bless'd;
I will not argue that, nor will repine.
But where delays he now? some great intent
Conceals him: when twelve years he scarce had seen,
I lost him, but so found, as well I saw
He could not lose himself, but went about
His Father's business; what he meant I mus'd,
Since understand; much more his absence now,
Thus long, to some great purpose he obscures.
But I to wait with patience am inur'd;
My heart hath been a storehouse long of things
And sayings laid up, portending strange events.'
Thus Mary, pondering oft, and oft to mind
Recalling what remarkably had pass'd
Since first her salutation heard, with thoughts
Meekly compos'd awaited the fulfilling:
The while her Son, tracing the desert wild,
Sole, but with holiest meditations fed,
Into himself descended, and at once
All his great work to come before him set;
How to begin, how to accomplish best
His end of being on earth, and mission high:
For Satan, with sly preface to return,
Had left him vacant, and with speed was gone
Up to the middle region of thick air,
Where all his potentates in council sat;
There, without sign of boast, or sign of joy,
Solicitous and blank, he thus began:
'Princes, Heaven's ancient sons, ethereal Thrones
Demonian Spirits now, from the' element
Each of his reign allotted, rightlier call'd

Powers of fire, air, water, and earth beneath,
(So may we hold our place and these mild seats
Without new trouble) such an enemy
Is risen to invade us, who no less
Threatens than our expulsion down to Hell;
I, as I undertook, and with the vote
Consenting in full frequence was impower'd,
Have found him, view'd him, tasted him; but find
Far other labour to be undergone
Than when I dealt with Adam, first of Men,
Though Adam by his wife's allurement fell,
However to this Man inferior far;
If he be Man by mother's side, at least
With more than human gifts from Heaven adorn'd,
Perfections absolute, graces divine,
And amplitude of mind to greatest deeds.
Therefore I am return'd, lest confidence
Of my success with Eve in Paradise
Deceive ye to persuasion over sure
Of like succeeding here: I summon all
Rather to be in readiness, with hand
Or counsel to assist; lest I, who erst
Thought none my equal, now be over-match'd.'
So spake th' old Serpent, doubting; and from all
With clamour was assur'd their utmost aid
At his command: when from amidst them rose
Belial, the dissolutest Spirit that fell,
The sensuallest, and, after Asmodai,
The fleshliest Incubus; and thus advis'd:
'Set woman in his eye, and in his walk,
Among daughters of men the fairest found:
Many are in each region passing fair
As the noon sky: more like to goddesses
Than mortal creatures, graceful and discreet,

Expert in amorous arts, enchanting tongues
Persuasive, virgin majesty with mild
And sweet allay'd, yet terrible to' approach,
Skill'd to retire, and, in retiring, draw
Hearts after them tangled in amorous nets.
Such object hath the power to soften' and tame
Severest temper, smooth the rugged'st brow,
Enerve, and with voluptuous hope dissolve,
Draw out with credulous desire, and lead
At will the manliest, resolutest breast,
As the magnetic hardest iron draws.
Women, when nothing else, beguil'd the heart
Of wisest Solomon, and made him build,
And made him bow, to the gods of his wives.'
To whom quick answer Satan thus return'd:
'Belial, in much uneven scale thou weigh'st
All others by thyself; because of old
Thou thyself doat'dst on womankind, admiring
Their shape, their colour, and attractive grace,
None are, thou think'st, but taken with such toys.
Before the Flood thou with thy lusty crew,
False titled 'sons of God,' roaming the earth,
Cast wanton eyes on the daughters of men,
And coupled with them, and begot a race.
Have we not seen, or by relation heard,
In courts and regal chambers how thou lurk'st,
In wood or grove, by mossy fountain side,
In valley or green meadow, to waylay
Some beauty rare, Calisto, Clymene,
Daphne, or Semele, Antiopa,
Or Amymone, Syrinx, many more
Too long, then lay'st thy scapes on names ador'd,
Apollo, Neptune, Jupiter, or Pan,
Satyr, or Faun, or Sylvan? But these haunts

Delight not all; among the sons of men,
How many' have with a smile made small account
Of Beauty and her lures, easily scorn'd
All her assaults, on worthier things intent!
Remember that Pellean conqueror,
A youth, how all the beauties of the East
He slightly view'd, and slightly overpass'd;
How he, surnam'd of Africa, dismiss'd,
In his prime youth, the fair Iberian maid.
For Solomon, he liv'd at ease, and full
Of honour, wealth, high fare, aim'd not beyond
Higher design than to enjoy his state:
Thence to the bait of women lay expos'd:
But he, whom we attempt, is wiser far
Than Solomon, of more exalted mind,
Made and set wholly on the' accomplishment
Of greatest things. What woman will you find,
Though of this age the wonder and the fame,
On whom his leisure will vouchsafe an eye
Of fond desire? Or should she, confident,
As sitting queen ador'd on Beauty's throne,
Descend with all her winning charms begirt
To' enamour, (as the zone of Venus once
Wrought that effect on Jove, so fables tell;)
How would one look from his majestic brow,
Seated as on the the top of Virtue's hill,
Discount'nance her despis'd, and put to rout
All her array; her female pride deject,
Or turn to reverent awe! for Beauty stands
In the' admiration only of weak minds
Led captive; cease to' admire, and all her plumes
Fall flat, and shrink into a trivial toy,
At every sudden slighting quite abash'd.

Therefore with manlier objects we must try
His constancy; with such as have more show
Of worth, of honour, glory, and popular praise,
Rocks, whereon greatest men have oftest wreck'd:
Or that which only seems to satisfy
Lawful desires of nature, not beyond;
And now I know he hungers, where no food
Is to be found, in the wide wilderness:
The rest commit to me; I shall let pass
No' advantage, and his strength as oft assay.'
He ceas'd, and heard their grant in loud acclaim;
Then forthwith to him takes a chosen band
Of Spirits likest to himself in guile,
To be at hand, and at his beck appear,
If cause were to unfold some active scene
Of various persons, each to know his part:
Then to the desert takes with these his flight;
Where, still from shade to shade the Son of God
After forty days fasting had remain'd.
Now hungering first, and to himself thus said:
'Where will this end? four times ten days I've pass'd
Wandering this woody maze, and human food
Nor tasted, nor had appetite; that fast
To virtue I impute not, or count part
Of what I suffer here; if nature need not,
Or God support nature without repast
Though needing, what praise is it to endure?
But now I feel I hunger, which declares
Nature hath need of what she asks; yet God
Can satisfy that need some other way,
Though hunger still remain: so it remain
Without this body's wasting, I content me,

And from the sting of famine fear no harm;
Nor mind it, fed with better thoughts, that feed
Me hungering more to do my Father's will.'
It was the hour of night, when thus the Son
Commun'd in silent walk, then laid him down
Under the hospitable covert nigh
Of trees thick interwoven; there he slept,
And dream'd, as appetite is wont to dream,
Of meats and drinks, nature's refreshment sweet:
Him thought, he by the brook of Cherith stood,
And saw the ravens with their horny beaks
Food to Elijah bringing, even and morn,
Though ravenous, taught to' abstain from what they [brought:
He saw the Prophet also, how he fled
Into the desert, and how there he slept
Under a juniper; then how awak'd
He found his supper on the coals prepar'd,
And by the Angel was bid rise and eat;
And eat the second time after repose,
The strength whereof suffic'd him forty days:
Sometimes that with Elijah he partook,
Or as a guest with Daniel at his pulse.
Thus wore out night; and now the herald lark
Left his ground-nest, high towering to descry
The Morn's approach, and greet her with his song:
As lightly from his grassy couch up rose
Our Saviour, and found all was but a dream;
Fasting he went to sleep, and fasting wak'd.
Up to a hill anon his steps he rear'd,
From whose high top to ken the prospect round,
If cottage were in view, sheep-cote, or herd;
But cottage, herd, or sheep-cote, none he saw;
Only' in a bottom saw a pleasant grove,
With chant of tuneful birds resounding loud:

Thither he bent his way, determin'd there
To rest at noon, and enter'd soon the shade
High-roof'd, and walks beneath, and alleys brown
That open'd in the midst a woody scene;
Nature's own work it seem'd, Nature taught Art,
And to a superstitious eye, the haunt
Of wood-gods and wood-nymphs: he view'd it round
When suddenly a man before him stood;
Not rustic as before, but seemlier clad,
As one in city, or court, or palace bred,
And with fair speech these words to him address'd
'With granted leave officious I return,
But much more wonder that the Son of God
In this wild solitude so long should bide,
Of all things destitute; and well I know,
Not without hunger. Others of some note,
As story tells, have trod this wilderness;
The fugitive bond-woman, with her son
Out-cast Nebaioth, yet found here relief
By a providing Angel; all the race
Of Israel here had famish'd, had not God
Rain'd from Heaven manna; and that Prophet bold,
Native of Thebez, wandering here was fed
Twice by a voice inviting him to eat:
Of thee these forty days none hath regard,
Forty and more deserted here indeed.' [hence?
To whom thus Jesus: 'What conclud'st thou
They all had need; I, as thou seest, have none.'
'How hast thou hunger then? (Satan replied)
Tell me, if food were now before thee set,
Would'st thou not eat?'—'Thereafter as I like
The giver,' answer'd Jesus. 'Why should that
Cause thy refusal? (said the subtle Fiend)
Hast thou not right to all created things?

Owe not all creatures by just right to thee
Duty and service, nor to stay till bid,
But tender all their power? Nor mention I
Meats by the law unclean, or offer'd first
To idols, those young Daniel could refuse;
Nor proffer'd by an enemy, though who
Would scruple that, with want oppress'd? behold,
Nature asham'd, or (better to express)
Troubled, that thou should'st hunger, hath purvey'd
From all the elements her choicest store,
To treat thee, as beseems, and as her Lord,
With honour: only deign to sit and eat.'
He spake no dream; for, as his words had end,
Our Saviour lifting up his eyes beheld,
In ample space under the broadest shade,
A table richly spread, in regal mode,
With dishes pil'd, and meats of noblest sort
And savour; beasts of chase, or fowl of game,
In pastry built, or from the spit, or boil'd,
Gris-amber-steam'd; all fish, from sea or shore,
Freshet or purling brook, of shell or fin,
And exquisitest name, for which was drain'd
Pontus, and Lucrine bay, and Afric coast:
(Alas, how simple, to these cates compar'd,
Was that crude apple that diverted Eve!)
And at a stately side-board, by the wine
That fragrant smell diffus'd, in order stood
Tall stripling youths rich clad, of fairer hue
Than Ganymed or Hylas, distant more
Under the trees now tripp'd, now solemn stood,
Nymphs of Diana's train, and Naiades
With fruits and flowers from Amalthea's horn,
And ladies of the' Hesperides, that seem'd
Fairer than feign'd of old, or fabled since

Of faëry damsels, met in forest wide
By knights of Logres, or of Lyones,
Lancelot, or Pelleas, or Pellenore.
And all the while harmonious airs were heard
Of chiming strings, or charming pipes; and winds
Of gentlest gale Arabian odours fann'd
From their soft wings, and Flora's earliest smells.
Such was the splendour: and the Tempter now
His invitation earnestly renew'd:
'What doubts the Son of God to sit and eat?
These are not fruits forbidd'n; no interdict
Defends the touching of these viands pure;
Their taste no knowledge works, at least of evil,
But life preserves, destroys life's enemy,
Hunger, with sweet restorative delight.
All these are spirits of air, and woods, and springs,
Thy gentle ministers, who come to pay
Thee homage, and acknowledge thee their Lord:
What doubt'st thou, Son of God? Sit down and eat.'
To whom thus Jesus temperately replied:
'Said'st thou not that to all things I had right?
And who withholds my power that right to use?
Shall I receive by gift what of my own,
When and where likes me best, I can command?
I can at will, doubt not, as soon as thou,
Command a table in this wilderness,
And call swift flights of Angels ministrant
Array'd in glory on my cup to' attend:
Why should'st thou then obtrude this diligence,
In vain, where no acceptance it can find?
And with my hunger what hast thou to do?
Thy pompous delicacies I contemn,
And count thy specious gifts no gifts, but guiles.
To whom thus answer'd Satan malecontent:

'That I have also power to give, thou seest;
If of that power I bring thee voluntary
What I might have bestow'd on whom I pleas'd,
And rather opportunely in this place
Chose to impart to thy apparent need,
Why should'st thou not accept it? but I see
What I can do or offer is suspect;
Of these things others quickly will dispose,
Whose pains have earn'd the far-fetch'd spoil.' With
Both table and provision vanish'd quite, [that
With sound of harpies' wings and talons heard:
Only the' impórtune Tempter still remain'd,
And with these words his temptation pursued:
'By hunger, that each other creature tames,
Thou art not to be harm'd, therefore not mov'd;
Thy temperance, invincible besides,
For no allurement yields to appetite;
And all thy heart is set on high designs,
High actions: but wherewith to be achiev'd?
Great acts require great means of enterprise;
Thou art unknown, unfriended, low of birth,
A carpenter thy father known, thyself
Bred up in poverty and straits at home,
Lost in a desert here and hunger-bit:
Which way, or from what hope, dost thou aspire
To greatness? whence authority deriv'st?
What followers, what retinue canst thou gain,
Or at thy heels the dizzy multitude,
Longer than thou canst feed them on thy cost?
Money brings honour, friends, conquest, and realms:
What rais'd Antipater the Edomite,
And his son Herod plac'd on Judah's throne,
Thy throne, but gold that got him puissant friends?
Therefore, if at great things thou would'st arrive,

Get riches first, get wealth, and treasure heap,
Not difficult, if thou hearken to me:
Riches are mine, fortune is in my hand;
They whom I favour thrive in wealth amain,
While virtue, valour, wisdom, sit in want.'
To whom thus Jesus patiently replied:
'Yet wealth, without these three, is impotent
To gain dominion, or to keep it gain'd.
Witness those ancient empires of the earth,
In height of all their flowing wealth dissolv'd:
But men endued with these have oft attain'd
In lowest poverty to highest deeds;
Gideon, and Jephtha, and the shepherd lad,
Whose offspring on the throne of Judah sat
So many ages, and shall yet regain
That seat, and reign in Israel without end.
Among the Heathen, (for throughout the world
To me is not unknown what hath been done
Worthy' of memorial) canst thou not remember
Quintius, Fabricius, Curius, Regulus?
For I esteem those names of men so poor,
Who could do mighty things, and could contemn
Riches, though offer'd from the hand of kings.
And what in me seems wanting, but that I
May also in this poverty as soon
Accomplish what they did, perhaps, and more?
Extol not riches then, the toil of fools,
The wise man's cumbrance, if not snare; more apt
To slacken Virtue, and abate her edge,
Than prompt her to do aught may merit praise.
What if with like aversion I reject
Riches and realms? yet not, for that a crown,
Golden in show, is but a wreath of thorns,
Brings dangers, troubles, cares, and sleepless nights,

To him who wears the regal diadem,
When on his shoulders each man's burden lies;
For therein stands the office of a king,
His honour, virtue, merit and chief praise,
That for the public all this weight he bears.
Yet he, who reigns within himself, and rules
Passions, desires, and fears, is more a king;
Which every wise and virtuous man attains;
And who attains not, ill aspires to rule
Cities of men, or headstrong multitudes,
Subject himself to anarchy within,
Or lawless passions in him, which he serves.
But to guide nations in the way of truth
By saving doctrine, and from error lead
To know, and knowing worship God aright,
Is yet more kingly? this attracts the soul,
Governs the inner man, the nobler part;
That other o'er the body only reigns,
And oft by force, which, to a generous mind,
So reigning, can be no sincere delight.
Besides, to give a kingdom hath been thought
Greater and nobler done, and to lay down
Far more magnanimous than to assume.
Riches are needless then, both for themselves,
And for thy reason why they should be sought,
To gain a sceptre, oftest better miss'd.'

END OF BOOK II.

THE

THIRD BOOK

OF

PARADISE REGAINED.

THE ARGUMENT.

Satan, in a speech of much flattering commendation, endeavours to awaken in Jesus a passion for glory, by particularising various instances of conquest achieved, and great actions performed, by persons at an early period of life. Our Lord replies, by showing the vanity of worldly fame, and the improper means by which it is generally attained: and contrasts with it the true glory of religious patience and virtuous wisdom, as exemplified in the character of Job. Satan justifies the love of glory from the example of God himself, who requires it from all his creatures. Jesus detects the fallacy of this argument, by showing that, as goodness is the true ground on which glory is due to the great Creator of all things, sinful man can have no right whatever to it.—Satan then urges our Lord respecting his claim to the throne of David; he tells him that the kingdom of Judea, being at that time a province of Rome, cannot be got possession of without much personal exertion on his part, and presses him to lose no time in beginning to reign. Jesus refers him to the time allotted for this, as for all other things; and, after intimating somewhat respecting his own previous sufferings, asks Satan, why he should be so solicitous for the exaltation of one, whose rising was destined to

be his fall. Satan replies, that his own desperate state, by excluding all hope, leaves little room for fear; and that, as his own punishment was equally doomed, he is not interested in preventing the reign of one, from whose apparent benevolence he might rather hope for some interference in his favour.—Satan still pursues his former incitements; and, supposing that the seeming reluctance of Jesus to be thus advanced might arise from his being unacquainted with the world and its glories, conveys him to the summit of a high mountain, and from thence shows him most of the kingdoms of Asia, particularly pointing out to his notice some extraordinary military preparations of the Parthians to resist the incursions of the Scythians. He then informs our Lord, that he showed him this, purposely that he might see how necessary military exertions are to retain the possession of kingdoms, as well as to subdue them at first, and advises him to consider how impossible it was to maintain Judea against two such powerful neighbours as the Romans and Parthians, and how necessary it would be to form an alliance with one or other of them. At the same time he recommends, and engages to secure to him, that of the Parthians: and tells him that by this means his power will be defended from any thing that Rome or Cæsar might attempt against it, and that he will be able to extend his glory wide, and especially to accomplish (what was particularly necessary to make the throne of Judea really the throne of David) the deliverance and restoration of the ten tribes, still in a state of captivity. Jesus, having briefly noticed the vanity of military efforts and the weakness of the arm of flesh, says, that when the time comes for ascending his allotted throne he shall not be slack: he remarks on Satan's extraordinary zeal for the deliverance of the Israelites, to whom he had always showed himself an enemy, and declares their servitude to be the consequence of their idolatry; but adds, that at a future time it may perhaps please God to recal them, and restore them to their liberty and native land.

PARADISE REGAINED.

BOOK III.

So spake the Son of God; and Satan stood
Awhile, as mute, confounded what to say,
What to reply, confuted, and convinc'd
Of his weak arguing and fallacious drift;
At length, collecting all his serpent wiles,
With soothing words renew'd, him thus accosts:
'I see thou know'st what is of use to know,
What best to say canst say, to do canst do;
Thy actions to thy words accord, thy words
To thy large heart give utterance due, thy heart
Contains of good, wise, just, the perfect shape.
Should kings and nations from thy mouth consult,
Thy counsel would be as the oracle
Urim and Thummim, those oraculous gems
On Aaron's breast; or tongue of seers old
Infallible: or wert thou sought to deeds
That might require th' array of war, thy skill
Of conduct would be such, that all the world
Could not sustain thy prowess, or subsist
In battle, though against thy few in arms.
These godlike virtues wherefore dost thou hide,
Affecting private life, or more obscure

In savage wilderness? Wherefore deprive
All Earth her wonder at thy acts, thyself
The fame and glory, glory the reward
That sole excites to high attempts, the flame
Of most erected spirits, most temper'd pure
Ethereal, who all pleasures else despise,
All treasures and all gain esteem as dross,
And dignities and powers all but the highest?
Thy years are ripe, and over-ripe; the son
Of Macedonian Philip had ere these
Won Asia, and the throne of Cyrus held
At his dispose; young Scipio had brought down
The Carthaginian pride; young Pompey quell'd
The Pontic king, and in triumph had rode.
Yet years, and to ripe years judgment mature,
Quench not the thirst of glory, but augment.
Great Julius, whom now all the world admires,
The more he grew in years, the more inflam'd
With glory, wept that he had lived so long
Inglorious: but thou yet art not too late.'
To whom our Saviour calmly thus replied:
'Thou neither dost persuade me to seek wealth
For empire's sake, nor empire to affect
For glory's sake, by all thy argument.
For what is glory but the blaze of fame,
The people's praise, if always praise unmix'd?
And what the people but a herd confus'd,
A miscellaneous rabble, who extol [praise?
Things vulgar, and, well weigh'd, scarce worth the
They praise and they admire, they know not what,
And know not whom, but as one leads the other;
And what delight to be by such extoll'd,
To live upon their tongues, and be their talk,
Of whom to be disprais'd were no small praise?

His lot who dares be singularly good.
Th' intelligent among them and the wise
Are few, and glory scarce of few is rais'd.
This is true glory and renown, when God,
Looking on the' earth, with approbation marks
The just man, and divulges him through Heaven
To all his Angels, who with true applause
Recount his praises: thus did he to Job,
When, to extend his fame through Heaven and Earth,
As thou to thy reproach may'st well remember,
He ask'd thee, 'Hast thou seen my servant Job?'
Famous he was in Heaven, on Earth less known;
Where glory is false glory, attributed
To things not glorious, men not worthy' of fame.
They err, who count it glorious to subdue
By conquest far and wide, to over-run
Large countries, and in field great battles win,
Great cities by assault: what do these worthies,
But rob and spoil, burn, slaughter, and enslave
Peaceable nations, neighbouring or remote,
Made captive, yet deserving freedom more
Than those their conquerors, who leave behind
Nothing but ruin, wheresoe'er they rove,
And all the flourishing works of peace destroy;
Then swell with pride, and must be titled Gods,
Great Benefactors of mankind, Deliverers,
Worship'd with temple, priest, and sacrifice?
One is the son of Jove, of Mars the other;
Till conqueror Death discover them scarce men,
Rolling in brutish vices, and deform'd,
Violent or shameful death their due reward.
But if there be in glory aught of good,
It may by means far different be attain'd,
Without ambition, war, or violence;

By deeds of peace, by wisdom eminent,
By patience, temperance: I mention still
Him, whom thy wrongs, with saintly patience borne,
Made famous in a land and times obscure;
Who names not now with honour patient Job?
Poor Socrates, (who next more memorable?)
By what he taught, and suffer'd for so doing,
For truth's sake suffering death, unjust, lives now
Equal in fame to proudest conquerors.
Yet if for fame and glory aught be done,
Aught suffer'd; if young African for fame
His wasted country freed from Punic rage;
The deed becomes unprais'd, the man at least,
And loses, though but verbal, his reward.
Shall I seek glory then, as vain men seek,
Oft not deserv'd? I seek not mine, but his
Who sent me; and thereby witness whence I am.'
To whom the Tempter murmuring thus replied:
'Think not so slight of glory; therein least
Resembling thy great Father: he seeks glory,
And for his glory all things made, all things
Orders and governs; not content in Heaven
By all his angels glorified, requires
Glory from men, from all men, good or bad,
Wise or unwise, no difference, no exemption;
Above all sacrifice, or hallow'd gift,
Glory' he requires, and glory he receives,
Promiscuous from all nations, Jew or Greek,
Or barbarous, nor exception hath declar'd;
From us, his foes pronounc'd, glory' he exacts.'
To whom our Saviour fervently replied:
'And reason; since his Word all things produc'd,
Though chiefly not for glory as prime end,
But to show forth his goodness, and impart

His good communicable to every soul
Freely; of whom what could he less expect
Than glory' and benediction, that is, thanks,
The slightest, easiest, readiest recompense
From them who could return him nothing else,
And, not returning that, would likeliest render
Contempt instead, dishonour, obloquy?
Hard recompense, unsuitable return
For so much good, so much beneficence!
But why should man seek glory, who' of his own
Hath nothing, and to whom nothing belongs,
But condemnation, ignominy, and shame?
Who, for so many benefits receiv'd,
Turn'd recreant to God, ingrate and false,
And so of all true good himself despoil'd;
Yet, sacrilegious, to himself would take
That which to God alone of right belongs:
Yet so much bounty is in God, such grace,
That who advance his glory, not their own,
Them he himself to glory will advance.'
So spake the Son of God; and here again
Satan had not to answer, but stood struck
With guilt of his own sin; for he himself,
Insatiable of glory, had lost all;
Yet of another plea bethought him soon:
'Of glory, as thou wilt, said he, so deem;
Worth or not worth the seeking, let it pass.
But to a kingdom thou art born, ordain'd
To sit upon thy father David's throne,
By mother's side thy father; though thy right
Be now in powerful hands, that will not part
Easily from possession won with arms:
Judæa now and all the Promis'd Land,
Reduc'd a province under Roman yoke,

Obeys Tiberius; nor is always rul'd
With temperate sway; oft have they violated
The temple of the law, with foul affronts,
Abominations rather, as did once
Antiochus: and think'st thou to regain
Thy right, by sitting still, or thus retiring?
So did not Maccabeus: he indeed
Retir'd unto the desert, but with arms;
And o'er a mighty king so oft prevail'd,
That by strong hand his family obtain'd, [usurp'd,
Though priests, the crown, and David's throne
With Modin and her suburbs once content.
If kingdom move thee not, let move thee zeal
And duty; zeal and duty are not slow,
But on occasion's forelock watchful wait:
They themselves rather are occasion best;
Zeal of thy father's house, duty to free
Thy country from her heathen servitude.
So shalt thou best fulfil, best verify
The prophets old, who sung thy endless reign;
The happier reign, the sooner it begins:
Reign then: what canst thou better do the while?"
To whom our Saviour answer thus return'd:
'All things are best fulfill'd in their due time;
And time there is for all things, Truth hath said,
If of my reign prophetic Writ hath told,
That it shall never end, so, when begin,
The father in his purpose hath decreed;
He, in whose hand all times and seasons roll.
What if he hath decreed that I shall first
Be tried in humble state, and things adverse,
By tribulations, injuries, insults,
Contempts, and scorns, and snares, and violence,
Suffering, abstaining, quietly expecting,

Without distrust or doubt, that he may know
What I can suffer, how obey? Who best
Can suffer, best can do; best reign, who first
Well hath obey'd; just trial, ere I merit
My exaltation without change or end.
But what concerns it thee, when I begin
My everlasting kingdom? Why art thou
Solicitous? What moves thy inquisition?
Know'st thou not that my rising is thy fall,
And my promotion will be thy destruction?
To whom the Tempter, inly rack'd, replied:
'Let that come when it comes; all hope is lost
Of my reception into grace: what worse?
For where no hope is left, is left no fear:
If there be worse, the expectation more
Of worse torments me than the feeling can.
I would be at the worst: worst is my port,
My harbour, and my ultimate repose;
The end I would attain, my final good.
My error was my error, and my crime
My crime; whatever, for itself condemn'd;
And will alike be punish'd, whether thou
Reign, or reign not; though to that gentle brow
Willingly could I fly, and hope thy reign,
From that placid aspect and meek regard,
Rather than aggravate my evil state,
Would stand between me and thy Father's ire,
(Whose ire I dread more than the fire of Hell)
A shelter, and a kind of shading cool
Interposition, as a summer's cloud.
If I then to the worst that can be haste,
Why move thy feet so slow to what is best,
Happiest, both to thyself and all the world,
That thou, who worthiest art, should'st be their king?

Perhaps thou linger'st, in deep thoughts detain'd
Of the' enterprise so hazardous and high;
No wonder; for, though in thee be' united
What of perfection can in man be found,
Or human nature can receive, consider,
Thy life hath yet been private, most part spent
At home, scarce view'd the Galilean towns,
And once a year Jerusalem, few days'
Short sojourn; and what thence could'st thou observe?
The world thou hast not seen, much less her glory,
Empires and monarchs, and their radiant courts,
Best school of best experience, quickest insight
In all things that to greatest actions lead.
The wisest, unexperienc'd, will be ever
Timorous and loth, with novice modesty,
(As he who, seeking asses, found a kingdom,)
Irresolute, unhardy, unadventrous:
But I will bring thee where thou soon shalt quit
Those rudiments, and see before thine eyes
The monarchies of the' earth, their pomp and state;
Sufficient introduction to inform
Thee, of thyself so apt, in regal arts
And regal mysteries; that thou may'st know
How best their opposition to withstand.'
With that, (such power was given him then) he took
The Son of God up to a mountain high.
It was a mountain at whose verdant feet
A spacious plain, outstretch'd in circuit wide,
Lay pleasant; from his side two rivers flow'd,
The' one winding, the' other straight, and left between
Fair champain with less rivers intervein'd,
Then meeting join'd their tribute to the sea:
Fertile of corn the glebe, of oil, and wine;

With herds the pastures throng'd, with flocks the hills;
Huge cities and high-tower'd, that well might seem
The seats of mightiest monarchs; and so large
The prospect was, that here and there was room
For barren desert, fountainless and dry.
To this high mountain top the Tempter brought
Our Saviour, and new train of words began:
'Well have we speeded, and o'er hill and dale,
Forest and field and flood, temples and towers,
Cut shorter many a league; here thou behold'st
Assyria, and her empire's ancient bounds,
Araxes and the Caspian lake; thence on
As far as Indus east, Euphrates west,
And oft beyond: to south the Persian bay,
And, inaccessible, the' Arabian drouth:
Here Nineveh, of length within her wall
Several days journey, built by Ninus old,
Of that first golden monarchy the seat,
And seat of Salmanasser, whose success
Israel in long captivity still mourns;
There Babylon, the wonder of all tongues,
As ancient, but rebuilt by him who twice
Judah and all thy father David's house
Led captive, and Jerusalem laid waste,
Till Cyrus set them free; Persepolis,
His city there thou seest, and Bactra there;
Ecbatana her structure vast there shows,
And Hecatompylos her hundred gates;
There Susa by Choaspes, amber stream,
The drink of none but kings; of later fame,
Built by Emathian or by Parthian hands,
The great Seleucia, Nisibis, and there
Artaxata, Teredon, Ctesiphon,
Turning with easy eye, thou may'st behold.

All these the Parthian, (now some ages past,
By great Arsaces led, who founded first
That empire,) under his dominion holds,
From the luxurious kings of Antioch won.
And just in time thou com'st to have a view
Of his great power; for now the Parthian king
In Ctesiphon hath gather'd all his host
Against the Scythian, whose incursions wild
Have wasted Sogdiana; to her aid
He marches now in haste; see, though from far,
His thousands, in what martial equipage
They issue forth, steel bows and shafts their arms,
Of equal dread in flight, or in pursuit;
All horsemen, in which fight they most excel;
See how in warlike muster they appear,
In rhombs, and wedges, and half-moons, and wings.'
He look'd, and saw what numbers numberless
The city gates out-pour'd, light-armed troops,
In coats of mail and military pride;
In mail their horses clad, yet fleet and strong,
Prancing their riders bore, the flower and choice
Of many provinces from bound to bound;
From Arachosia, from Candaor east,
And Margiana to the' Hyrcanian cliffs
Of Caucasus, and dark Iberian dales;
From Atropatia and the neighbouring plains
Of Adiabene, Media, and the south
Of Susiana, to Balsara's haven.
He saw them in their forms of battle rang'd,
How quick they wheel'd, and flying' behind them shot
Sharp sleet of arrowy showers against the face
Of their pursuers, and overcame by flight;
The field all iron cast a gleaming brown:
Nor wanted clouds of foot, nor on each horn

Cuirassiers all in steel for standing fight,
Chariots, or elephants indors'd with towers
Of archers; nor of labouring pioneers
A multitude, with spades and axes arm'd
To lay hills plain, fell woods, or valleys fill,
Or where plain was raise hill, or overlay
With bridges rivers proud; as with a yoke;
Mules after these, camels and dromedaries,
And wagons, fraught with útensils of war.
Such forces met not, nor so wide a camp,
When Agrican with all his northern powers
Besieg'd Albracca, as romances tell,
The city of Gallaphrone, from whence to win
The fairest of her sex Angelica,
His daughter, sought by many prowest knights,
Both paynim, and the peers of Charlemain.
Such and so numerous was their chivalry:
At sight whereof the fiend yet more presum'd,
And to our Saviour thus his words renew'd:
'That thou may'st know I seek not to engage
Thy virtue, and not every way secure
On no slight grounds thy safety; hear, and mark,
To what end I have brought thee hither, and shown
All this fair sight: thy kingdom, though foretold,
By Prophet or by Angel, unless thou
Endeavour, as thy father David did,
Thou never shalt obtain; prediction still
In all things, and all men, supposes means;
Without means us'd, what it predicts revokes.
But, say thou wert possess'd of David's throne,
By free consent of all, none opposite,
Samaritan or Jew; how couldst thou hope
Long to enjoy it, quiet and secure,
Between two such enclosing enemies,

Roman and Parthian? Therefore one of these
Thou must make sure thy own; the Parthian first
By my advice, as nearer, and of late
Found able by invasion to annoy
Thy country, and captive lead away her kings,
Antigonus and old Hyrcanus, bound,
Maugre the Roman: it shall be my task
To render thee the Parthian at dispose,
Choose which thou wilt, by conquest or by league:
By him thou shalt regain, without him not,
That which alone can truly re-instal thee
In David's royal seat, his true successor,
Deliverance of thy brethren, those ten tribes
Whose offspring in his territory' yet serve,
In Habor, and among the Medes dispers'd:
Ten sons of Jacob, two of Joseph, lost
Thus long from Israel, serving, as of old
Their fathers in the land of Egypt serv'd,
This offer sets before thee to deliver.
These if from servitude thou shalt restore
To their inheritance, then, nor till then,
Thou on the throne of David in full glory,
From Egypt to Euphrates, and beyond,
Shalt reign, and Rome or Cæsar not need fear.'
To whom our Saviour answer'd thus, unmov'd:
'Much ostentation vain of fleshly arm
And fragile arms, much instrument of war,
Long in preparing, soon to nothing brought,
Before mine eyes thou hast set; and in my ear
Vented much policy, and projects deep
Of enemies, of aids, battles and leagues,
Plausible to the world, to me worth nought.
Means I must use, thou say'st, prediction else
Will unpredict, and fail me of the throne:

My time, I told thee, (and that time for thee
Were better farthest off) is not yet come:
When that comes, think not thou to find me slack
On my part aught endeavouring, or to need
Thy politic maxims, or that cumbersome
Luggage of war there shown me, argument
Of human weakness rather than of strength.
My brethren, as thou call'st them, those ten tribes
I must deliver, if I mean to reign
David's true heir, and his full sceptre sway
To just extent over all Israel's sons.
But whence to thee this zeal? Where was it then
For Israel, or for David, or his throne,
When thou stood'st up his tempter to the pride
Of numbering Israel, which cost the lives
Of threescore and ten thousand Israelites
By three days pestilence? Such was thy zeal
To Israel then; the same that now to me!
As for those captive tribes, themselves were they
Who wrought their own captivity, fell off
From God to worship calves, the deities
Of Egypt, Baal next and Ashtaroth,
And all the' idolatries of Heathen round,
Besides their other worse than heathenish crimes;
Nor in the land of their captivity
Humbled themselves, or penitent besought
The God of their forefathers; but so died
Impenitent, and left a race behind
Like to themselves, distinguishable scarce
From Gentiles, but by circumcision vain;
And God with idols in their worship join'd.
Should I of these the liberty regard,
Who, freed, as to their ancient patrimony,
Unhumbled, unrepentant, unreform'd,

Headlong would follow; and to their gods perhaps
Of Bethel and of Dan? No; let them serve
Their enemies, who serve idols with God.
Yet he at length, (time to himself best known)
Remembering Abraham, by some wondrous call
May bring them back, repentant and sincere,
And at their passing cleave the' Assyrian flood,
While to their native land with joy they haste;
As the Red Sea and Jordan once he cleft,
When to the Promis'd Land their fathers pass'd:
To his due time and providence I leave them.'
  So spake Israel's true king, and to the Fiend
Made answer meet, that made void all his wiles.
So fares it, when with truth falsehood contends.

END OF BOOK III.

THE

FOURTH BOOK

OF

PARADISE REGAINED.

THE ARGUMENT.

Satan, persisting in the temptation of our Lord, shows him Imperial Rome in its greatest pomp and splendor, as a power which he probably would prefer before that of the Parthians; and tells him that he might with the greatest ease expel Tiberius, restore the Romans to their liberty, and make himself master not only of the Roman empire, but by so doing, of the whole world, and inclusively of the throne of David. Our Lord, in reply, expresses his contempt of grandeur and worldly power, notices the luxury, vanity, and profligacy of the Romans; declaring how little they merited to be restored to that liberty, which they had lost by their misconduct; and briefly refers to the greatness of his own future kingdom. Satan, now desperate, to enhance the value of his proffered gifts, professes that the only terms, on which he will bestow them, are our Saviour's falling down and worshipping him. Our Lord expresses a firm but temperate indignation at such a proposition, and rebukes the Tempter by the title of 'Satan for ever damned.' Satan, abashed, attempts to justify himself: he then assumes a new ground of temptation, and, proposing to Jesus the intellectual gratifications of wisdom and knowledge, points out to him the celebrated seat of ancient

learning, Athens, its schools, and other various resorts of learned teachers and their disciples; accompanying the view with a highly-finished panegyric on the Grecian musicians, poets, orators, and philosophers of the different sects. Jesus replies, by showing the vanity and insufficiency of the boasted Heathen philosophy; and prefers to the music, poetry, eloquence, and didactic policy of the Greeks, those of the inspired Hebrew writers. Satan, irritated at the failure of all his attempts, upbraids the indiscretion of our Saviour in rejecting his offers; and having, in ridicule of his expected kingdom, foretold the sufferings that our Lord was to undergo, carries him back into the wilderness, and leaves him there. Night comes on: Satan raises a tremendous storm, and attempts further to alarm Jesus with frightful dreams, and terrific threatening spectres; which, however, have no effect upon him. A calm, bright, beautiful morning succeeds to the horrors of the night. Satan again presents himself to our blessed Lord, and, from noticing the storm of the preceding night as pointed chiefly at him, takes occasion once more to insult him with an account of the sufferings which he was certainly to undergo. This only draws from our Lord a brief rebuke. Satan, now at the height of his desperation, confesses that he had frequently watched Jesus from his birth, purposely to discover if he was the true Messiah; and, collecting from what passed at the river Jordan that he most probably was so, he had from that time more assiduously followed him, in hopes of gaining some advantage over him, which would most effectually prove that he was not really that Divine Person destined to be his 'fatal enemy.' In this he acknowledges that he has hitherto completely failed; but still determines to make one more trial of him. Accordingly he conveys him to the Temple at Jerusalem, and, placing him on a pointed eminence, requires him to prove his Divinity, either by standing there, or casting himself down with safety. Our Lord reproves the Tempter, and at the same time manifests his own Divinity by standing on this dangerous point. Satan, amazed and terrified, instantly falls; and repairs to his Infernal Compeers, to relate the bad success of his enterprise. Angels in the mean time convey our blessed Lord to a beautiful valley, and, while they minister to him a repast of celestial food, celebrate his victory in a triumphant hymn.

PARADISE REGAINED.

BOOK IV.

Perplex'd and troubled at his bad success
The Tempter stood, nor had what to reply,
Discover'd in his fraud, thrown from his hope
So oft, and the persuasive rhetoric
That sleek'd his tongue, and won so much on Eve,
So little here, nay lost; but Eve was Eve;
This far his over-match, who, self-deceiv'd
And rash, before-hand had no better weigh'd
The strength he was to cope with, or his own:
But as a man, who had been matchless held
In cunning, over-reach'd where least he thought,
To salve his credit, and for very spite,
Still will be tempting him who foils him still,
And never cease, though to his shame the more;
Or as a swarm of flies in vintage time,
About the wine-press where sweet must is pour'd,
Beat off, returns as oft with humming sound;
Or surging waves against a solid rock,
Though all to shivers dash'd, the' assault renew,
(Vain battery!) and in froth or bubbles end;
So Satan, whom repulse upon repulse
Met ever, and to shameful silence brought,

Yet gives not o'er, though desperate of success,
And his vain importunity pursues.
He brought our Saviour to the western side
Of that high mountain, whence he might behold
Another plain, long, but in breadth not wide,
Wash'd by the southern sea, and, on the north,
To equal length back'd with a ridge of hills [men,
That screen'd the fruits of the' earth, and seats of
From cold Septentrion blasts; thence in the midst
Divided by a river, of whose banks
On each side an imperial city stood,
With towers and temples proudly elevate
On seven small hills, with palaces adorn'd,
Porches, and theatres, baths, aqueducts,
Statues, and trophies, and triumphal arcs,
Gardens, and groves presented to his eyes,
Above the height of mountains interpos'd:
(By what strange parallax, or optic skill
Of vision, multiplied through air, or glass
Of telescope, were curious to inquire;)
And now the Tempter thus his silence broke:
'The city, which thou seest, no other deem
Than great and glorious Rome, queen of the earth,
So far renown'd, and with the spoils enrich'd
Of nations; there the Capitol thou seest,
Above the rest lifting his stately head
On the Tarpeian rock, her citadel
Impregnable; and there mount Palatine,
The' imperial palace, compass huge, and high
The structure, skill of noblest architects,
With gilded battlements conspicuous far,
Turrets, and terraces, and glittering spires:
Many' a fair edifice besides, more like
Houses of gods, (so well I have dispos'd

My aëry microscope) thou may'st behold,
Outside and inside both, pillars and roofs,
Carv'd work, the hand of fam'd artificers,
In cedar, marble, ivory, or gold.
Thence to the gates cast round thine eye, and see
What conflux issuing forth, or entering in:
Prætors, proconsuls to their provinces
Hasting, or on return, in robes of state,
Lictors and rods, the ensigns of their power,
Legions and cohorts, turns of horse and wings:
Or embassies from regions far remote,
In various habits, on the Appian road,
Or on the Emilian; some from farthest south,
Syene, and where the shadow both way falls,
Meroe, Nilotic isle; and, more to west,
The realm of Bocchus to the Black-moor sea;
From the Asian kings, and Parthian among these;
From India and the golden Chersonese,
And utmost Indian isle Taprobane,
Dusk faces, with white silken turbans wreath'd;
From Gallia, Gades, and the British west;
Germans, and Scythians, and Sarmatians, north
Beyond Danubius to the Tauric pool.
All nations now to Rome obedience pay;
To Rome's great emperor, whose wide domain,
In ample territory, wealth and power,
Civility of manners, arts and arms,
And long renown, thou justly may'st prefer
Before the Parthian. These two thrones except,
The rest are barbarous, and scarce worth the sight,
Shar'd among petty kings too far remov'd;
These having shown thee, I have shown thee all
The kingdoms of the world, and all their glory.
This emperor hath no son, and now is old,

Old and lascivious, and from Rome retir'd
To Capreæ, an island small, but strong,
On the Campanian shore, with purpose there
His horrid lusts in private to enjoy:
Committing to a wicked favourite
All public cares, and yet of him suspicious;
Hated of all, and hating. With what ease,
Endued with regal virtues, as thou art,
Appearing, and beginning noble deeds,
Might'st thou expel this monster from his throne,
Now made a sty, and, in his place ascending,
A victor people free from servile yoke!
And with my help thou may'st; to me the power
Is given, and by that right I give it thee.
Aim therefore at no less than all the world;
Aim at the highest: without the highest attain'd,
Will be for thee no sitting, or not long,
On David's throne, be prophesied what will.'
To whom the Son of God, unmov'd, replied:
'Nor doth this grandeur and majestic show
Of luxury, though call'd magnificence,
More than of arms before, allure mine eye, [tell
Much less my mind; though thou should'st add to
Their sumptuous gluttonies, and gorgeous feasts
On citron tables or Atlantic stone,
(For I have also heard, perhaps have read,)
Their wines of Setia, Cales, and Falerne,
Chios, and Crete, and how they quaff in gold,
Crystal, and myrrhine cups, emboss'd with gems
And studs of pearl: to me should'st tell, who thirst
And hunger still. Then embassies thou show'st
From nations far and nigh: what honour that,
But tedious waste of time, to sit and hear
So many hollow compliments and lies,

Outlandish flatteries! Then proceed'st to talk
Of the' emperor, how easily subdued,
How gloriously: I shall, thou say'st, expel
A brutish monster; what if I withal
Expel a Devil who first made him such?
Let his tormenter conscience find him out;
For him I was not sent; nor yet to free
That people, victor once, now vile and base;
Deservedly made vassal; who, once just,
Frugal and mild, and temperate, conquer'd well,
But govern ill the nations under yoke,
Peeling their provinces, exhausted all
By lust and rapine; first ambitious grown
Of triumph, that insulting vanity;
Then cruel, by their sports to blood inur'd
Of fighting beasts, and men to beasts expos'd;
Luxurious by their wealth, and greedier still,
And from the daily scene effeminate.
What wise and valiant man would seek to free
These, thus degenerate, by themselves enslav'd;
Or could of inward slaves make outward free?
Know, therefore, when my season comes to sit
On David's throne, it shall be like a tree
Spreading and overshadowing all the earth;
Or as a stone, that shall to pieces dash
All monarchies besides throughout the world;
And of my kingdom there shall be no end:
Means there shall be to this; but what the means,
Is not for thee to know, nor me to tell.'

To whom the Tempter, impudent, replied:
'I see all offers made by me how slight
Thou valuest, because offer'd, and reject'st:
Nothing will please the difficult and nice,
Or nothing more than still to contradict:

On the' other side know also thou, that I
On what I offer set as high esteem,
Nor what I part with mean to give for nought;
All these, which in a moment thou behold'st,
The kingdoms of the world, to thee I give,
(For, given to me, I give to whom I please,)
No trifle; yet with this reserve, not else,
On this condition, if thou wilt fall down,
And worship me as thy superior lord,
(Easily done) and hold them all of me;
For what can less so great a gift deserve?"
Whom thus our Saviour answered with disdain:
'I never lik'd thy talk, thy offers less;
Now both abhor, since thou hast dar'd to utter
The' abominable terms, impious condition:
But I endure the time, till which expir'd
Thou hast permission on me. It is written,
The first of all commandments, "Thou shalt worship
The Lord thy God, and only him shalt serve;"
And dar'st thou to the Son of God propound
To worship thee accurs'd? now more accurs'd
For this attempt, bolder than that on Eve,
And more blasphemous; which expect to rue.
The kingdoms of the world to thee were given?
Permitted rather, and by thee usurp'd;
Other donation none thou canst produce.
If given, by whom but by the King of kings,
God over all supreme? If given to thee,
By thee how fairly is the giver now
Repaid! But gratitude in thee is lost
Long since. Wert thou so void of fear or shame,
As offer them to me, the Son of God?
To me my own, on such abhorred pact,
That I fall down and worship thee as God?

Get thee behind me: plain thou now appear'st
That Evil-one, Satan for ever damn'd.'
To whom the Fiend, with fear abash'd, replied:
'Be not so sore offended, Son of God,
(Though sons of God both Angels are and Men)
If I, to try whether in higher sort
Than these thou bear'st that title, have propos'd
What both from Men and Angels I receive,
Tetrarchs of fire, air, flood, and on the earth,
Nations beside from all the quarter'd winds,
God of this world invok'd, and world beneath:
Who then thou art, whose coming is foretold
To me most fatal, me it most concerns;
The trial hath indamag'd thee no way,
Rather more honour left and more esteem;
Me nought advantag'd, missing what I aim'd.
Therefore let pass, as they are transitory,
The kingdoms of this world; I shall no more
Advise thee; gain them us thou canst, or not.
And thou thyself seem'st otherwise inclin'd
Than to a worldly crown; addicted more
To contemplation and profound dispute,
As by that early action may be judg'd,
When slipping from thy mother's eye, thou went'st
Alone into the temple, there wast found
Among the gravest Rabbies, disputant
On points, and questions fitting Moses' chair, [man,
Teaching, not taught. The childhood shows the
As morning shows the day: be famous then
By wisdom; as thy empire must extend,
So let extend thy mind o'er all the world
In knowledge, all things in it comprehend.
All knowledge is not couch'd in Moses' law,
The Pentateuch, or what the Prophets wrote;

The Gentiles also know, and write, and teach
To admiration, led by Nature's light,
And with the Gentiles much thou must converse,
Ruling them by persuasion, as thou mean'st;
Without their learning, how wilt thou with them,
Or they with thee, hold conversation meet?
How wilt thou reason with them, how refute
Their idolisms, traditions, paradoxes?
Error by his own arms is best evinc'd.
Look once more, ere we leave this specular mount,
Westward, much nearer by southwest, behold;
Where on the' Ægean shore a city stands,
Built nobly, pure the air, and light the soil;
Athens, the eye of Greece, mother of arts
And eloquence, native to famous wits
Or hospitable, in her sweet recess,
City' or suburban, studious walks and shades.
See there the olive grove of Academe,
Plato's retirement, where the Attic bird
Trills her thick-warbled notes the summer long;
There flowery hill Hymettus, with the sound
Of bees' industrious murmur, oft invites
To studious musing; there Ilissus rolls
His whispering stream: within the walls, then view
The schools of ancient sages; his, who bred
Great Alexander to subdue the world,
Lyceum there, and painted Stoa next:
There shalt thou hear and learn the secret power
Of harmony, in tones and numbers hit
By voice or hand; and various-measur'd verse,
Æolian charms and Dorian lyric odes,
And his, who gave them breath, but higher sung,
Blind Melesigenes, thence Homer call'd,
Whose poem Phœbus challeng'd for his own:

Thence what the lofty grave tragedians taught
In chorus or iambic, teachers best
Of moral prudence, with delight receiv'd
In brief sententious precepts, while they treat
Of fate, and chance, and change in human life,
High actions and high passions best describing:
Thence to the famous orators repair,
Those ancient, whose resistless eloquence
Wielded, at will, that fierce democraty,
Shook the' arsenal, and fulmin'd over Greece
To Macedon and Artaxerxes' throne:
To sage Philosophy next lend thine ear,
From Heaven descended to the low-roof'd house
Of Socrates; see there his tenement,
Whom well inspir'd the oracle pronounc'd
Wisest of men; from whose mouth issued forth
Mellifluous streams, that water'd all the schools
Of Academics old and new, with those
Surnam'd Peripatetics, and the sect
Epicurean, and the Stoic' severe;
These here revolve, or, as thou lik'st, at home,
Till time mature thee to a kingdom's weight;
These rules will render thee a king complete
Within thyself, much more with empire join'd."
To whom our Saviour sagely thus replied:
"Think not but that I know these things, or think
I know them not: not therefore am I short
Of knowing what I ought: he, who receives
Light from above, from the fountain of light,
No other doctrine needs, though granted true;
But these are false, or little else but dreams,
Conjectures, fancies, built on nothing firm.
The first and wisest of them all profess'd
To know this only, that he nothing knew;

The next to fabling fell, and smooth conceits;
A third sort doubted all things, though plain sense;
Others in virtue plac'd felicity,
But virtue join'd with riches and long life;
In corporal pleasure he, and careless ease;
The Stoic last in philosophic pride,
By him call'd virtue; and his virtuous man,
Wise, perfect in himself, and all possessing
Equal to God, oft shames not to prefer,
As fearing God nor man, contemning all
Wealth, pleasure, pain or torment, death and life,
Which, when he lists, he leaves, or boasts he can,
For all his tedious talk is but vain boast,
Or subtle shifts conviction to evade.
Alas! what can they teach, and not mislead,
Ignorant of themselves, of God much more,
And how the world began, and how man fell
Degraded by himself, on grace depending?
Much of the soul they talk, but all awry,
And in themselves seek virtue, and to themselves
All glory arrogate, to God give none;
Rather accuse him under usual names,
Fortune and Fate, as one regardless quite
Of mortal things. Who therefore seeks in these
True wisdom, finds her not; or by delusion
Far worse, her false resemblance only meets,
An empty cloud. However, many books,
Wise men have said, are wearisome; who reads
Incessantly, and to his reading brings not
A spirit and judgment equal or superior,
(And what he brings what needs he elsewhere seek?)
Uncertain and unsettled still remains,
Deep vers'd in books, and shallow in himself,
Crude or intoxicate, collecting toys

And trifles for choice matters, worth a sponge;
As children gathering pebbles on the shore.
Or, if I would delight my private hours
With music or with poem, where, so soon
As in our native language, can I find
That solace? All our law and story strew'd
With hymns, our psalms with artful terms inscrib'd,
Our Hebrew songs and harps, in Babylon
That pleas'd so well our victors' ear, declare
That rather Greece from us these arts deriv'd;
Ill imitated, while they loudest sing
The vices of their deities, and their own,
In fable, hymn, or song, so personating
Their gods ridiculous, and themselves past shame.
Remove their swelling epithets, thick laid
As varnish on a harlot's cheek, the rest,
Thin sown with aught of profit or delight,
Will far be found unworthy to compare
With Sion's songs, to all true tastes excelling,
Where God is prais'd aright, and godlike men,
The Holiest of Holies, and his saints,
(Such are from God inspir'd, not such from thee,)
Unless where moral virtue is express'd
By light of nature, not in all quite lost.
Their orators thou then extoll'st, as those
The top of eloquence; statists indeed,
And lovers of their country, as may seem;
But herein to our prophets far beneath,
As men divinely taught, and better teaching
The solid rules of civil government,
In their majestic unaffected style,
Than all the' oratory of Greece and Rome.
In them is plainest taught, and easiest learnt,
What makes a nation happy, and keeps it so,

What ruins kingdoms, and lays cities flat;
These only with our law best form a king.'
So spake the Son of God; but Satan, now
Quite at a loss, (for all his darts were spent)
Thus to our Saviour with stern brow replied:
'Since neither wealth nor honour, arms nor arts,
Kingdom nor empire pleases thee, nor aught
By me propos'd in life contemplative
Or active, tended on by glory' or fame,
What dost thou in this world? The wilderness
For thee is fittest place; I found thee there,
And thither will return thee; yet remember
What I foretel thee, soon thou shalt have cause
To wish thou never hadst rejected, thus
Nicely or cautiously, my offer'd aid,
Which would have set thee in short time with ease
On David's throne, or throne of all the world,
Now at full age, fulness of time, thy season
When prophecies of thee are best fulfill'd.
Now contrary, if I read aught in Heaven,
Or Heaven write aught of fate, by what the stars
Voluminous, or single characters,
In their conjunction met, give me to spell,
Sorrows, and labours, opposition, hate
Attend thee, scorns, reproaches, injuries,
Violence and stripes, and lastly cruel death;
A kingdom they portend thee, but what kingdom,
Real or allegoric, I discern not;
Nor when; eternal sure, as without end,
Without beginning; for no date prefix'd
Directs me in the starry rubric set.'
So saying he took, (for still he knew his power
Not yet expir'd) and to the wilderness
Brought back the Son of God, and left him there,

Feigning to disappear. Darkness now rose,
As daylight sunk, and brought in lowering night,
Her shadowy offspring; unsubstantial both,
Privation mere of light and absent day.
Our Saviour meek, and with untroubled mind
After his aëry jaunt, though hurried sore,
Hungry and cold, betook him to his rest,
Wherever under some concourse of shades,
Whose branching arms thick intertwin'd might shield
From dews and damps of night his shelter'd head;
But, shelter'd, slept in vain; for at his head
The Tempter watch'd, and soon with ugly dreams
Disturb'd his sleep. And either tropic now
'Gan thunder, and both ends of Heaven; the clouds,
From many a horrid rift abortive pour'd
Fierce rain with lightning mix'd, water with fire
In ruin reconcil'd: nor slept the winds
Within their stony caves, but rush'd abroad
From the four hinges of the world, and fell
On the vex'd wilderness, whose tallest pines,
Though rooted deep as high, and sturdiest oaks,
Bow'd their stiff necks, loaden with stormy blasts,
Or torn up sheer. Ill wast thou shrouded then,
O patient Son of God, yet only stood'st
Unshaken! nor yet staid the terror there;
Infernal ghosts and hellish furies round [shriek'd,
Environ'd thee, some howl'd, some yell'd, some
Some bent at thee their fiery darts, while thou
Sat'st unappall'd in calm and sinless peace!
Thus pass'd the night so foul, till morning fair
Came forth, with pilgrim steps, in amice gray;
Who with her radiant finger still'd the roar
Of thunder, chas'd the clouds, and laid the winds,
And grisly spectres, which the fiend had rais'd

To tempt the Son of God with terrors dire.
And now the sun with more effectual beams
Had cheer'd the face of earth, and dried the wet
From drooping plant or dropping tree; the birds,
Who all things now behold more fresh and green,
After a night of storm so ruinous,
Clear'd up their choicest notes in bush and spray,
To gratulate the sweet return of morn.
Nor yet, amidst this joy and brightest morn,
Was absent, after all his mischief done,
The Prince of darkness; glad would also seem
Of this fair change, and to our Saviour came;
Yet with no new device, (they all were spent,)
Rather by this his last affront resolv'd,
Desperate of better course, to vent his rage
And mad despite to be so oft repell'd.
Him walking on a sunny hill he found,
Back'd on the north and west by a thick wood;
Out of the wood he starts in wonted shape,
And in a careless mood thus to him said:
'Fair morning yet betides thee, Son of God,
After a dismal night: I heard the wrack,
As earth and sky would mingle; but myself [them
Was distant; and these flaws, though mortals fear
As dangerous to the pillar'd frame of Heaven,
Or to the earth's dark basis underneath,
Are to the main as inconsiderable
And harmless, if not wholesome, as a sneeze
To man's less universe, and soon are gone;
Yet, as being ofttimes noxious where they light
On man, beast, plant, wasteful and turbulent,
Like turbulences in the' affairs of men,
Over whose heads they roar, and seem to point,
They oft fore-signify and threaten ill;

This tempest at this desert most was bent;
Of men at thee, for only thou here dwell'st.
Did I not tell thee, if thou did'st reject
The perfect season offer'd with my aid
To win thy destin'd seat, but wilt prolong
All to the push of fate, pursue thy way
Of gaining David's throne, no man knows when,
For both the when and how is no where told?
Thou shalt be what thou art ordain'd, no doubt;
For Angels have proclaim'd it, but concealing
The time and means. Each act is rightliest done,
Not when it must, but when it may be best:
If thou observe not this, be sure to find,
What I foretold thee, many a hard assay
Of dangers and adversities and pains,
Ere thou of Israel's sceptre get fast hold;
Whereof this ominous night, that clos'd thee round,
So many terrors, voices, prodigies,
May warn thee, as a sure fore-going sign.'
So talk'd he, while the Son of God went on
And staid not, but in brief him answer'd thus:
'Me worse than wet thou find'st not; other harm
Those terrors, which thou speak'st of, did me none;
I never fear'd they could, though noising loud
And threatening nigh: what they can do, as signs
Betokening or ill boding, I contemn
As false portents, not sent from God, but thee;
Who, knowing I shall reign past thy preventing,
Obtrud'st thy offer'd aid, that I, accepting,
At least might seem to hold all power of thee,
Ambitious spirit! and would'st be thought my God;
And storm'st refus'd, thinking to terrify
Me to thy will?—Desist, (thou art discern'd,
And toil'st in vain,) nor me in vain molest.'

To whom the fiend, now swoln with rage, replied:
'Then hear, O Son of David, Virgin-born,
For Son of God to me is yet in doubt;
Of the Messiah I had heard foretold
By all the prophets; of thy birth at length,
Announc'd by Gabriel, with the first I knew,
And of the' angelic song in Bethlehem field,
On thy birth-night that sung thee Saviour born.
From that time seldom have I ceas'd to eye
Thy infancy, thy childhood, and thy youth,
Thy manhood last, though yet in private bred;
Till at the ford of Jordan, whither all
Flock to the Baptist, I, among the rest,
(Though not to be baptiz'd) by voice from Heaven
Heard thee pronounc'd 'the Son of God belov'd.'
Thenceforth I thought thee worth my nearer view
And narrower scrutiny, that I might learn
In what degree or meaning thou art call'd
The Son of God; which bears no single sense.
The son of God I also am, or was;
And if I was, I am; relation stands:
All men are sons of God; yet thee I thought
In some respect far higher so declar'd:
Therefore I watch'd thy footsteps from that hour,
And follow'd thee still on to this vast wild;
Where, by all best conjectures, I collect
Thou art to be my fatal enemy:
Good reason then, if I before-hand seek
To understand my adversary, who
And what he is; his wisdom, power, intent;
By pearl or composition, truce or league,
To win him, or win from him what I can:
And opportunity I here have had
To try thee, sift thee, and confess have found thee

Proof against all temptation, as a rock
Of adamant, and, as a centre, firm;
To the' utmost of mere man both wise and good,
Not more; for honours, riches, kingdoms, glory,
Have been before contemn'd, and may again.
Therefore, to know what more thou art than man
Worth naming 'Son of God' by voice from Heaven,
Another method I must now begin.'

So saying, he caught him up, and, without wing
Of hippogrif, bore through the air sublime,
Over the wilderness and o'er the plain,
Till underneath them fair Jerusalem,
The holy city, lifted high her towers,
And higher yet the glorious temple rear'd
Her pile, far off appearing like a mount
Of alabaster, topt with golden spires:
There, on the highest pinnacle, he set
The Son of God; and added thus in scorn:

'There stand, if thou wilt stand; to stand upright
Will ask thee skill; I to thy father's house
Have brought thee, and highest plac'd: highest is [best:
Now show thy progeny; if not to stand,
Cast thyself down; safely, if Son of God:
For it is written, "He will give command
Concerning thee to' his angels, in their hands
They shall uplift thee, lest at any time
Thou chance to dash thy foot against a stone".'

To whom thus Jesus: 'Also it is written,
"Tempt not the Lord thy God".' He said, and stood:
But Satan, smitten with amazement, fell.
As when Earth's son Antæus, (to compare
Small things with greatest) in Irassa strove
With Jove's Alcides, and oft foil'd, still rose,
Receiving from his mother earth new strength,

Fresh from his fall, and fiercer grapple join'd,
Throttled at length in the' air, expir'd and fell;
So, after many a foil, the tempter proud
Renewing fresh assaults, amidst his pride,
Fell whence he stood to see his victor fall:
And as that Theban monster, that propos'd
Her riddle, and him who solv'd it not devour'd,
That once found out and solv'd, for grief and spite
Cast herself headlong from the' Ismenian steep;
So, struck with dread and anguish, fell the Fiend,
And to his crew, that sat consulting, brought
(Joyless triumphals of his hop'd success)
Ruin, and desperation, and dismay,
Who durst so proudly tempt the Son of God.
So Satan fell; and straight a fiery globe
Of Angels on full sail of wing flew nigh,
Who on their plumy vans receiv'd him soft
From his uneasy station, and upbore,
As on a floating couch, through the blithe air;
Then, in a flowery valley, set him down
On a green bank, and set before him spread
A table of celestial food, divine
Ambrosial fruits, fetch'd from the tree of life,
And, from the fount of life, ambrosial drink,
That soon refresh'd him wearied, and repair'd
What hunger, if aught hunger, had impair'd,
Or thirst; and, as he fed, angelic quires
Sung heavenly anthems of his victory
Over temptation and the Tempter proud:—
'True image of the Father; whether thron'd
In the bosom of bliss, and light of light
Conceiving, or, remote from Heaven, enshrin'd
In fleshly tabernacle, and human form,
Wandering the wilderness; whatever place,

Habit, or state, or motion; still expressing.
The Son of God, with godlike force endued
Against the' attempter of thy Father's throne,
And thief of Paradise! him long of old
Thou didst rebel, and down from Heaven cast
With all his army; now thou hast aveng'd
Supplanted Adam, and, by vanquishing
Temptation, hast regain'd lost Paradise,
And frustrated the conquest fraudulent.
He never more henceforth will dare set foot
In Paradise to tempt; his snares are broke:
For, though that seat of earthly bliss be fail'd,
A fairer Paradise is founded now
For Adam and his chosen sons, whom thou,
A Saviour, art come down to re-instal,
Where they shall dwell secure, when time shall be,
Of Tempter and temptation without fear.
But thou, infernal Serpent! shalt not long
Rule in the clouds; like an autumnal star,
Or lightning, thou shalt fall from Heaven, trod down
Under his feet: for proof, ere this thou feel'st
Thy wound, (yet not thy last and deadliest wound)
By this repulse receiv'd, and hold'st in Hell
No triumph: in all her gates Abaddon rues
Thy bold attempt. Hereafter learn with awe
To dread the Son of God: he, all unarm'd,
Shall chase thee, with the terror of his voice,
From thy demoniac holds, possession foul,
Thee and thy legions; yelling they shall fly,
And beg to hide them in a herd of swine,
Lest he command them down into the deep,
Bound, and to torment sent before their time.—
Hail, Son of the Most High, heir of both worlds,

Queller of Satan! on thy glorious work
Now enter; and begin to save mankind.'
Thus they the Son of God, our Saviour meek,
Sung victor, and, from heavenly feast refresh'd,
Brought on his way with joy; he, unobserv'd,
Home to his mother's house private return'd.

END OF PARADISE REGAINED.

COMUS.

A

MASK,

PRESENTED AT LUDLOW CASTLE, 1634.

BEFORE

JOHN, EARL OF BRIDGEWATER,

THEN PRESIDENT OF WALES.

* TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

JOHN LORD VISCOUNT BRACKLEY,†

Son and Heir-Apparent to the Earl of Bridgewater, &c.

MY LORD,

THIS poem, which received its first occasion of birth from yourself and others of your noble family, and much honour from your own person in the performance, now returns again to make a final dedication of itself to you. Although not openly acknowledged by the author,‡ yet it is a legitimate offspring, so lovely and so much desired, that the often copying of it hath tired my pen to give my several friends satisfaction, and brought me to a necessity of producing it to the public view; and now to offer it up in all rightful devotion to those fair hopes, and rare endowments of your much promising youth, which give a full assurance, to all that know you, of a future excellence. Live, sweet Lord, to be the honour of your name, and receive this as your own, from the hands of him, who hath by many favours been long obliged to your most honoured parents, and as in this representation your attendant *Thyrsis*, so now in all real expression

Your faithful and most humble servant,

H. LAWES.

* This is the dedication to Lawes's edition of the Mask, 1637.

† The First Brother in the Mask. *Warton.*

‡ It never appeared under Milton's name, till the year 1645.

THE PERSONS.

The Attendant Spirit, *afterwards in the habit of* Thyrsis.
Comus, *with his Crew.*
The Lady.
First Brother.
Second Brother.
Sabrina, *the Nymph.*

THE CHIEF PERSONS, WHO PRESENTED, WERE,

The Lord Brackley.
Mr. Thomas Egerton *his brother.*
The Lady Alice Egerton.

COMUS.

The first Scene discovers a wild Wood.

The ATTENDANT SPIRIT *descends* or *enters,*

BEFORE the starry threshold of Jove's court
My mansion is, where those immortal shapes
Of bright aërial spirits live inspher'd
In regions mild of calm and serene air,
Above the smoke and stir of this dim spot,
Which men call Earth; and, with low-thoughted care
Confin'd and pester'd in this pin-fold here,
Strive to keep up a frail and feverish being,
Unmindful of the crown that Virtue gives,
After this mortal change, to her true servants,
Amongst the enthron'd gods on sainted seats.
Yet some there be, that by due steps aspire
To lay their just hands on that golden key,
That opes the palace of Eternity:
To such my errant is; and, but for such,
I would not soil these pure ambrosial weeds
With the rank vapours of this sin-worn mould.
But to my task. Neptune, besides the sway
Of every salt flood, and each ebbing stream,
Took in by lot 'twixt high and nether Jove
Imperial rule of all the sea-girt isles,

That, like to rich and various gems, inlay
The unadorned bosom of the deep:
Which he, to grace his tributary gods,
By course commits to several government,
And gives them leave to wear their sapphire crowns,
And wield their little tridents: but this Isle,
The greatest and the best of all the main,
He quarters to his blue-hair'd deities;
And all this tract that fronts the falling sun
A noble Peer of mickle trust and power
Has in his charge, with temper'd awe to guide
An old and haughty nation, proud in arms:
Where his fair offspring, nurs'd in princely lore,
Are coming to attend their father's state,
And new-entrusted sceptre: but their way
Lies through the perplex'd paths of this drear wood,
The nodding horror of whose shady brows
Threats the forlorn and wandering passenger;
And here their tender age might suffer peril,
But that by quick command from sovereign Jove
I was dispatch'd for their defence and guard:
And listen why; for I will tell you now
What never yet was heard in tale or song,
From old or modern bard, in hall or bower.

Bacchus, that first from out the purple grape
Crush'd the sweet poison of misused wine,
After the Tuscan mariners transform'd,
Coasting the Tyrrhene shore, as the winds listed,
On Circe's island fell: (who knows not Circe,
The daughter of the Sun, whose charmed cup
Whoever tasted, lost his upright shape,
And downward fell into a grovelling swine?)
This Nymph, that gaz'd upon his clustering locks
With ivy berries wreath'd, and his blithe youth,

Had by him, ere he parted thence, a son
Much like his father, but his mother more,
Whom therefore she brought up, and Comus nam'd:
Who, ripe and frolic of his full grown age,
Roving the Celtic and Iberian fields,
At last betakes him to this ominous wood;
And, in thick shelter of black shades imbower'd,
Excels his mother at her mighty art,
Offering to every weary traveller
His orient liquor in a crystal glass, [taste,
To quench the drouth of Phœbus; which as they
(For most do taste through fond intemperate thirst)
Soon as the potion works, their human countenance,
The' express resemblance of the gods, is chang'd
Into some brutish form of wolf, or bear,
Or ounce, or tiger, hog, or bearded goat,
All other parts remaining as they were;
And they, so perfect is their misery,
Not once perceive their foul disfigurement,
But boast themselves more comely than before;
And all their friends and native home forget,
To roll with pleasure in a sensual sty.
Therefore when any, favour'd of high Jove,
Chances to pass through this adventurous glade,
Swift as the sparkle of a glancing star
I shoot from heaven, to give him safe convoy,
As now I do: but first I must put off
These my sky robes spun out of Iris' woof,
And take the weeds and likeness of a swain
That to the service of this house belongs,
Who with his soft pipe, and smooth-dittied song,
Well knows to still the wild winds when they roar,
And hush the waving woods; nor of less faith,
And in this office of his mountain watch

Likeliest, and nearest to the present aid
Of this occasion. But I hear the tread
Of hateful steps; I must be viewless now.

COMUS *enters with a charming-rod in one hand, his glass in the other; with him a rout of monsters, headed like sundry sorts of wild beasts, but otherwise like men and women, their apparel glistering; they come in making a riotous and unruly noise, with torches in their hands.*

COMUS.

The star that bids the shepherd fold,
Now the top of heaven doth hold;
And the gilded car of day
His glowing axle doth allay
In the steep Atlantic stream;
And the slope sun his upward beam
Shoots against the dusky pole,
Pacing toward the other goal
Of his chamber in the East.
Meanwhile welcome Joy, and Feast,
Midnight Shout and Revelry,
Tipsy Dance, and Jollity.
Braid your locks with rosy twine,
Dropping odours, dropping wine.
Rigour now is gone to bed,
And Advice with scrupulous head.
Strict Age and sour Severity,
With their grave saws, in slumber lie.
We, that are of purer fire,
Imitate the starry quire,
Who, in their nightly watchful spheres,
Lead in swift round the months and years.
The sounds and seas, with all their finny drove,
Now to the moon in wavering morrice move;

And, on the tawny sands and shelves,
Trip the pert faeries and the dapper elves.
By dimpled brook and fountain brim,
The wood nymphs, deck'd with daisies trim,
Their merry wakes and pastimes keep.
What hath night to do with sleep?
Night hath better sweets to prove;
Venus now wakes, and wakens Love.
Come, let us our rites begin;
'Tis only daylight that makes sin,
Which these dun shades will ne'er report.—
Hail, goddess of nocturnal sport,
Dark-veil'd Cotytto! to whom the secret flame
Of midnight torches burns; mysterious dame,
That ne'er art call'd, but when the dragon womb
Of Stygian darkness spits her thickest gloom,
And makes one blot of all the air;
Stay thy cloudy ebon chair,
Wherein thou rid'st with Hecat', and befriend
Us thy vow'd priests, till utmost end
Of all thy dues be done, and none left out;
Ere the babbling eastern scout,
The nice morn, on the Indian steep
From her cabin'd loop-hole peep,
And to the tell-tale sun descry
Our conceal'd solemnity.—
Come, knit hands, and beat the ground,
In a light fantastic round.

THE MEASURE.

Break off, break off: I feel the different pace
Of some chaste footing near about this ground.
Run to your shrouds, within these brakes and trees;
Our number may affright: some virgin, sure,
(For so I can distinguish by mine art)

Benighted in these woods. Now to my charms,
And to my wily trains; I shall, ere long,
Be well stock'd with as fair a herd as graz'd
About my mother Circe. Thus I hurl
My dazzling spells into the spongy air,
Of power to cheat the eye with blear illusion,
And give it false presentments, lest the place
And my quaint habits breed astonishment,
And put the damsel to suspicious flight;
Which must not be, for that's against my course:
I, under fair prétence of friendly ends,
And well plac'd words of glozing courtesy,
Baited with reasons not unplausible,
Wind me into the easy-hearted man,
And hug him into snares. When once her eye
Hath met the virtue of this magic dust,
I shall appear some harmless villager,
Whom thrift keeps up about his country gear.
But here she comes. I fairly step aside,
And hearken, if I may, her business here.

The LADY *enters.*

Lady. This way the noise was, if mine ear be true,
My best guide now. Methought it was the sound
Of riot and ill manag'd merriment,
Such as the jocund flute, or gamesome pipe,
Stirs up among the loose, unletter'd hinds;
When from their teeming flocks, and granges full,
In wanton dance they praise the bounteous Pan,
And thank the gods amiss. I should be loth
To meet the rudeness and swill'd insolence
Of such late wassailers; yet O! where else
Shall I inform my unacquainted feet,
In the blind mazes of this tangled wood?
My brothers, when they saw me wearied out

With this long way, resolving here to lodge,
Under the spreading favour of these pines,
Stept, as they said, to the next thicket side,
To bring me berries, or such cooling fruit
As the kind hospitable woods provide.
They left me then, when the gray-hooded Even,
Like a sad votarist in palmer's weed,
Rose from the hindmost wheels of Phœbus' wain:
But where they are, and why they came not back,
Is now the labour of my thoughts; 'tis likeliest
They had engag'd their wandering steps too far;
And envious Darkness, ere they could return,
Had stole them from me: else, O thievish Night,
Why should'st thou, but for some felonious end,
In thy dark lantern thus close up the stars,
That Nature hung in Heaven, and fill'd their lamps
With everlasting oil, to give due light
To the misled and lonely traveller?
This is the place, as well as I may guess,
Whence even now the tumult of loud mirth
Was rife, and perfect in my listening ear;
Yet nought but single darkness do I find.
What might this be? A thousand fantasies
Begin to throng into my memory,
Of calling shapes, and beckoning shadows dire,
And aery tongues, that syllable men's names
On sands, and shores, and desert wildernesses.
These thoughts may startle well, but not astound,
The virtuous mind, that ever walks attended
By a strong siding champion, Conscience.
O welcome, pure ey'd Faith, white handed Hope,
Thou hovering angel, girt with golden wings,
And thou, unblemish'd form of Chastity!
I see ye visibly, and now believe

That He, the Supreme Good, to whom all things ill
Are but as slavish officers of vengeance,
Would send a glistering guardian, if need were,
To keep my life and honour unassail'd.
Was I deceiv'd, or did a sable cloud
Turn forth her silver lining on the night?
I did not err: there does a sable cloud
Turn forth her silver lining on the night,
And casts a gleam over this tufted grove.
I cannot halloo to my brothers, but
Such noise as I can make, to be heard farthest,
I'll venture; for my new-enliven'd spirits
Prompt me; and they, perhaps, are not far off.

SONG.

Sweet Echo, sweetest nymph, that liv'st, unseen,
Within thy aery shell,
By slow Meander's margent green,
And in the violet-embroider'd vale,
Where the love-lorn nightingale
Nightly to thee her sad song mourneth well;
Canst thou not tell me of a gentle pair,
That likest thy Narcissus are?
O, if thou have
Hid them in some flowery cave,
Tell me but where,
Sweet queen of parley, daughter of the sphere!
So may'st thou be translated to the skies,
And give resounding grace to all Heaven's harmonies.

Enter COMUS.

Comus. Can any mortal mixture of earth's mould
Breathe such divine, enchanting ravishment?
Sure something holy lodges in that breast,

And with these raptures moves the vocal air
To testify his hidden residence.
How sweetly did they float upon the wings
Of silence, through the empty-vaulted night,
At every fall smoothing the raven-down
Of darkness, till it smil'd! I have oft heard
My mother Circe, with the Syrens three,
Amidst the flowery-kirtled Naiades,
Culling their potent herbs and baleful drugs;
Who, as they sung, would take the prison'd soul,
And lap it in Elysium: Scylla wept,
And chid her barking waves into attention,
And fell Charybdis murmur'd soft applause:
Yet they in pleasing slumber lull'd the sense,
And in sweet madness robb'd it of itself:
But such a sacred and home-felt delight,
Such sober certainty of waking bliss,
I never heard till now. I'll speak to her,
And she shall be my queen. Hail, foreign wonder!
Whom certain these rough shades did never breed,
Unless the goddess that, in rural shrine,
Dwell'st here with Pan, or Sylvan; by bless'd song
Forbidding every bleak, unkindly fog
To touch the prosperous growth of this tall wood.

Lad. Nay, gentle shepherd, ill is lost that praise,
That is address'd to unattending ears:
Not any boast of skill, but extreme shift
How to regain my sever'd company,
Compell'd me to awake the courteous Echo,
To give me answer from her mossy couch. [thus?

Com. What chance, good Lady, hath bereft you

Lad. Dim darkness and this leafy labyrinth.

Com. Could that divide you from near ushering guides?

Lad. They left me weary on a grassy turf.

Com. By falsehood, or discourtesy, or why?
La. To seek i' the valley some cool friendly spring.
Com. And left your fair side all unguarded, Lady?
Lad. They were but twain, and purpos'd quick return.
Com. Perhaps forestalling night prevented them.
Lad. How easy my misfortune is to hit!
Com. Imports their loss, beside the present need?
Lad. No less than if I should my Brothers lose.
Com. Were they of manly prime, or youthful bloom?
Lad. As smooth as Hebe's their unrazor'd lips.
Com. Two such I saw, what time the labour'd ox
In his loose traces from the furrow came,
And the swink'd hedger at his supper sat.
I saw them under a green mantling vine,
That crawls along the side of yon small hill,
Plucking ripe clusters from the tender shoots.
Their port was more than human, as they stood:
I took it for a faery vision
Of some gay creatures of the element,
That in the colours of the rainbow live,
And play i' the plighted clouds. I was awe-struck,
And, as I pass'd, I worship'd: if those you seek,
It were a journey like the path to Heaven,
To help you find them.
Lad. Gentle villager,
What readiest way would bring me to that place?
Com. Due west it rises from this shrubby point.
Lad. To find out that, good shepherd, I suppose,
In such a scant allowance of star-light,
Would overtask the best land-pilot's art,
Without the sure guess of well-practis'd feet.
Com. I know each lane, and every alley green,
Dingle, or bushy dell of this wild wood,

And every bosky bourn from side to side,
My daily walks and ancient neighbourhood;
And if your stray attendance be yet lodg'd,
Or shroud within these limits, I shall know
Ere morrow wake, or the low-roosted lark
From her thatch'd pallet rouse; if otherwise,
I can conduct you, Lady, to a low
But loyal cottage, where you may be safe
Till further quest.

Lad. Shepherd I take thy word,
And trust thy honest offer'd courtesy,
Which oft is sooner found in lowly sheds
With smoky rafters, than in tap'stry halls
In courts of princes, where it first was nam'd,
And yet is most pretended: in a place
Less warranted than this, or less secure,
I cannot be, that I should fear to change it.—
Eye me, bless'd Providence, and square my trial
To my proportion'd strength.—Shepherd, lead on.
[*Exeunt.*

Enter the Two Brothers.

El. Br. Unmuffle, ye faint stars; and thou, fair moon,
That wont'st to love the traveller's benison,
Stoop thy pale visage through an amber cloud,
And disinherit Chaos, that reigns here
In double night of darkness and of shades;
Or, if your influence be quite dam'd up
With black usurping mists, some gentle taper,
Though a rush-candle from the wicker hole
Of some clay habitation, visit us
With thy long-levell'd rule of streaming light;
And thou shalt be our star of Arcady,
Or Tyrian Cynosure.

Sec. Br. Or, if our eyes
Be barr'd that happiness, might we but hear
The folded flocks penn'd in their wattled cotes,
Or sound of pastoral reed with oaten stops,
Or whistle from the lodge, or village cock
Count the night watches to his feathery dames,
'Twould be some solace yet, some little cheering,
In this close dungeon of innumerous boughs.
But, O that hapless virgin, our lost Sister!
Where may she wander now, whither betake her
From the chill dew, among rude burs and thistles?
Perhaps some cold bank is her bolster now,
Or 'gainst the rugged bark of some broad elm
Leans her unpillow'd head, fraught with sad fears.
What, if in wild amazement and affright?
Or, while we speak, within the direful grasp
Of savage hunger, or of savage heat?

El. Br. Peace, Brother; be not over exquisite
To cast the fashion of uncertain evils:
For grant they be so, while they rest unknown,
What need a man forestal his date of grief,
And run to meet what he would most avoid?
Or if they be but false alarms of fear,
How bitter is such self-delusion!
I do not think my Sister so to seek,
Or so unprincipled in Virtue's book,
And the sweet peace that goodness bosoms ever,
As that the single want of light and noise
(Not being in danger, as I trust she is not)
Could stir the constant mood of her calm thoughts,
And put them into misbecoming plight.
Virtue could see to do what Virtue would
By her own radiant light, though sun and moon
Were in the flat sea sunk. And Wisdom's self

Oft seeks to sweet retired solitude;
Where, with her best nurse, Contemplation,
She plumes her feathers, and lets grow her wings,
That in the various bustle of resort
Were all-to ruffled, and sometimes impair'd.
He, that has light within his own clear breast,
May sit i' the centre, and enjoy bright day:
But he, that hides a dark soul and foul thoughts,
Benighted walks under the mid-day sun;
Himself is his own dungeon.

Sec. Br. 'Tis most true,
That musing Meditation most affects
The pensive secrecy of desert cell,
Far from the cheerful haunt of men and herds,
And sits as safe as in a senate-house;
For who would rob a hermit of his weeds,
His few books, or his beads, or maple dish,
Or do his gray hairs any violence?
But Beauty, like the fair Hesperian tree
Laden with blooming gold, had need the guard
Of dragon-watch with unenchanted eye,
To save her blossoms, and defend her fruit,
From the rash hand of bold Incontinence.
You may as well spread out the unsun'd heaps
Of misers' treasure by an outlaw's den,
And tell me it is safe, as bid me hope
Danger will wink on Opportunity,
And let a single helpless maiden pass
Uninjur'd in this wild surrounding waste.
Of night, or loneliness, it recks me not;
I fear the dread events that dog them both,
Lest some ill-greeting touch attempt the person
Of our unowned Sister.

El. Br. I do not, Brother,

Infer, as if I thought my Sister's state
Secure, without all doubt or controversy;
Yet, where an equal poise of hope and fear
Does arbitrate the' event, my nature is
That I incline to hope, rather than fear,
And gladly banish squint suspicion.
My Sister is not so defenceless left
As you imagine; she has a hidden strength,
Which you remember not.

Sec. Br. What hidden strength,
Unless the strength of Heaven, if you mean that?

El. Br. I mean that too, but yet a hidden strength,
Which, if Heaven gave it, may be term'd her own:
'Tis Chastity, my Brother, Chastity:
She, that has that, is clad in complete steel;
And, like a quiver'd Nymph with arrows keen,
May trace huge forests, and unharbour'd heaths,
Infamous hills, and sandy perilous wilds;
Where, through the sacred rays of Chastity,
No savage fierce, bandite, or mountaineer,
Will dare to soil her virgin purity:
Yea there, where very Desolation dwells,
By grots and caverns shagg'd with horrid shades,
She may pass on with unblench'd majesty;
Be it not done in pride, or in presumption.
Some say, no evil thing that walks by night
In fog or fire, by lake or moorish fen,
Blue meagre hag, or stubborn unlaid ghost
That breaks his magic chains at curfew time,
No goblin, or swart faery of the mine,
Hath hurtful power o'er true virginity.
Do ye believe me yet, or shall I call
Antiquity from the old schools of Greece
To testify the arms of Chastity?
Hence had the huntress Dian her dread bow.

Fair silver-shafted queen, for ever chaste,
Wherewith she tam'd the brinded lioness
And spotted mountain-pard, but set at nought
The frivolous bolt of Cupid; gods and men [woods.
Fear'd her stern frown, and she was queen o' the
What was that snaky-headed Gorgon shield,
That wise Minerva wore, unconquer'd virgin,
Wherewith she freez'd her foes to congeal'd stone,
But rigid looks of chaste austerity,
And noble grace, that dash'd brute violence
With sudden adoration and blank awe?
So dear to Heaven is saintly Chastity,
That, when a soul is found sincerely so,
A thousand liveried Angels lackey her,
Driving far off each thing of sin and guilt;
And, in clear dream and solemn vision,
Tell her things that no gross ear can hear;
Till oft converse with heavenly habitants
Begin to cast a beam on the' outward shape,
The unpolluted temple of the mind,
And turns it by degrees to the soul's essence,
Till all be made immortal: but when Lust,
By unchaste looks, loose gestures, and foul talk,
But most by lewd and lavish act of sin,
Lets in defilement to the inward parts,
The soul grows clotted by contagion,
Imbodies, and imbrutes, till she quite lose
The divine property of her first being.
Such are those thick and gloomy shadows damp,
Oft seen in charnel vaults and sepulchres
Lingering, and sitting by a new-made grave,
As loth to leave the body that it lov'd,
And link'd itself by carnal sensuality
To a degenerate and degraded state.

Sec. Br. How charming is divine Philosophy!
Not harsh, and crabbed, as dull fools suppose,
But musical as is Apollo's lute;
And a perpetual feast of nectar'd sweets,
Where no crude surfeit reigns.
El. Br. List, list; I hear
Some far-off halloo break the silent air.
Sec. B. Methought so too; what should it be?
El. B. For certain
Either some one like us night-founder'd here,
Or else some neighbour woodman, or, at worst,
Some roving robber calling to his fellows.
Sec. B. Heaven keep my Sister! Again, again, and [near!
Best draw, and stand upon our guard.
El. B. I'll halloo:
If he be friendly, he comes well; if not,
Defence is a good cause, and Heaven be for us!

Enter the ATTENDANT SPIRIT, *habited like a shepherd.*

That halloo I should know; what are you? speak;
Come not too near, you fall on iron stakes else.
Spir. What voice is that? my young Lord; speak again.
Sec. B. O Brother, 'tis my father's shepherd, sure.
El. B. Thyrsis? Whose artful strains have oft de-
The huddling brook to hear his madrigal, [lay'd
And sweeten'd every muskrose of the dale?
How cam'st thou here, good swain? hath any ram
Slipt from the fold, or young kid lost his dam,
Or straggling wether the pent flock forsook?
How could'st thou find this dark sequester'd nook?
Spir. O my lov'd master's heir, and his next joy,
I came not here on such a trivial toy

As a stray'd ewe, or to pursue the stealth
Of pilfering wolf; not all the fleecy wealth,
That doth enrich these downs, is worth a thought
To this my errand, and the care it brought.
But, O my virgin Lady, where is she?
How chance she is not in your company?

El. B. To tell thee sadly, Shepherd, without
Or our neglect, we lost her as we came. [blame,

Spir. Ay me unhappy! then my fears are true.

El. B. What fears, good Thyrsis? Pr'ythee briefly [shew.

Spir. I'll tell ye; 'tis not vain or fabulous,
(though so esteem'd by shallow ignorance)
What the sage poets, taught by the' heavenly Muse,
Storied of old in high immortal verse,
Of dire chimeras, and enchanted isles,
And rifted rocks whose entrance leads to Hell;
For such there be, but unbelief is blind.
Within the navel of this hideous wood,
Immur'd in cypress shades a sorcerer dwells,
Of Bacchus and of Circe born, great Comus,
Deep skill'd in all his mother's witcheries;
And here to every thirsty wanderer
By sly enticement gives his baneful cup,
With many murmurs mix'd, whose pleasing poison
The visage quite transforms of him that drinks,
And the inglorious likeness of a beast
Fixes instead, unmoulding reason's mintage
Character'd in the face: this have I learnt
Tending my flocks hard by i' the hilly crofts,
That brow this bottom-glade; whence night by night
He and his monstrous rout are heard to howl,
Like stabled wolves, or tigers at their prey,
Doing abhorred rites to Hecaté
In their obscured haunts of inmost bowers.

Yet have they many baits, and guileful spells,
To' inveigle and invite the' unwary sense
Of them that pass unweeting by the way.
This evening late, by then the chewing flocks
Had ta'en their supper on the savoury herb
Of knot-grass dew-besprent, and were in fold,
I sat me down to watch upon a bank
With ivy canopied, and interwove
With flaunting honeysuckle, and began,
Wrapt in a pleasing fit of melancholy,
To meditate my rural minstrelsy
Till Fancy had her fill; but, ere a close,
The wonted roar was up amidst the woods,
And fill'd the air with barbarous dissonance;
At which I ceas'd, and listen'd them a while,
Till an unusual stop of sudden silence
Gave respite to the drowsy frighted steeds,
That draw the litter of close-curtain'd Sleep:
At last a soft and solemn-breathing sound
Rose like a steam of rich distill'd perfumes,
And stole upon the air, that even Silence
Was took ere she was ware, and wish'd she might
Deny her nature, and be never more,
Still to be so displac'd. I was all ear,
And took in strains that might create a soul
Under the ribs of Death! but O! ere long,
Too well I did perceive it was the voice
Of my most honour'd Lady, your dear Sister.
Amaz'd I stood, harrow'd with grief and fear,
And, O poor hapless nightingale, thought I,
How sweet thou sing'st, how near the deadly snare!
Then down the lawns I ran with headlong haste,
Through paths and turnings often trod by day,
Till, guided by mine ear, I found the place,

Where that damn'd wisard, hid in sly disguise,
(For so by certain signs I knew) had met
Already, ere my best speed could prevent,
The aidless innocent Lady, his wish'd prey;
Who gently ask'd if he had seen such two,
Supposing him some neighbour villager.
Longer I durst not stay, but soon I guess'd
Ye were the two she meant; with that I sprung
Into swift flight, till I had found you here;
But further know I not.

Sec. Br. O night, and shades!
How are ye join'd with Hell in triple knot
Against the' unarmed weakness of one virgin,
Alone, and helpless! Is this the confidence
You gave me, Brother?

El. Br. Yes, and keep it still;
Lean on it safely; not a period
Shall be unsaid for me: against the threats
Of malice, or of sorcery, or that power
Which erring men call Chance, this I hold firm,—
Virtue may be assail'd, but never hurt,
Surpris'd by unjust force, but not enthrall'd;
Yea, even that, which mischief meant most harm,
Shall in the happy trial prove most glory:
But evil on itself shall back recoil,
And mix no more with goodness; when at last
Gather'd like scum, and settled to itself,
It shall be in eternal restless change
Self-fed, and self-consumed: if this fail,
The pillar'd firmament is rottenness, [on.
And earth's base built on stubble.—But come, let's
Against the' opposing will and arm of Heaven
May never this just sword be lifted up;
But for that damn'd magician, let him be girt

With all the grisly legions that troop
Under the sooty flag of Acheron,
Harpies and Hydras, or all the monstrous forms
'Twixt Africa and Ind, I'll find him out,
And force him to return his purchase back,
Or drag him by the curls to a foul death,
Curs'd as his life.

Spir. Alas! good venturous Youth,
I love thy courage yet, and bold emprise;
But here thy sword can do thee little stead;
Far other arms and other weapons must
Be those, that quell the might of hellish charms:
He, with his bare wand, can unthread thy joints,
And crumble all thy sinews.

El. Br. Why pr'ythee, Shepherd,
How durst thou then thyself approach so near,
As to make this relation?

Spir. Care, and utmost shifts,
How to secure the lady from surprisal,
Brought to my mind a certain shepherd lad,
Of small regard to see to, yet well skill'd
In every virtuous plant, and healing herb,
That spreads her verdant leaf to' the morning ray:
He lov'd me well, and oft would beg me sing;
Which when I did, he on the tender grass
Would sit, and hearken ev'n to ecstasy,
And in requital ope his leathern scrip,
And show me simples of a thousand names,
Telling their strange and vigorous faculties:
Amongst the rest a small unsightly root,
But of divine effect, he cull'd me out;
The leaf was darkish, and had prickles on it,
But in another country, as he said,
Bore a bright golden flower, but not in this soil:

Unknown, and like esteem'd, and the dull swain
Treads on it daily with his clouted shoon:
And yet more med'cinal is it than that Moly,
That Hermes once to wise Ulysses gave;
He call'd it Hæmony, and gave it me,
And bade me keep it as of sovereign use
'Gainst all enchantments, mildew blast, or damp,
Or ghastly furies' apparition.
I purs'd it up, but little reckoning made,
Till now that this extremity compell'd:
But now I find it true; for by this means
I knew the foul enchanter though disguis'd,
Enter'd the very lime-twigs of his spells,
And yet came off: if you have this about you,
(As I will give you when we go) you may
Boldly assault the necromancer's hall;
Where if he be, with dauntless hardihood
And brandish'd blade rush on him; break his glass,
And shed the luscious liquor on the ground,
But seize his wand; though he and his curs'd crew
Fierce sign of battle make, and menace high,
Or like the sons of Vulcan vomit smoke,
Yet will they soon retire, if he but shrink.

El. Br. Thyrsis, lead on apace, I'll follow thee;
And some good Angel bear a shield before us.

The Scene changes to a stately palace, set out with all manner of deliciousness: soft music, tables spread with all dainties. COMUS *appears with his rabble, and the* LADY *set in an enchanted chair, to whom he offers his glass, which she puts by, and goes about to rise.*

COMUS.

Nay, Lady, sit; if I but wave this wand,
Your nerves are all chain'd up in alabaster,

And you a statue, or as Daphne was,
Root-bound, that fled Apollo.

Lad. Fool, do not boast;
Thou canst not touch the freedom of my mind
With all thy charms, although this corporal rind
Thou hast immanacled, while Heaven sees good.

Com. Why are you vex'd, Lady? Why do you frown?
Here dwell no frowns, nor anger; from these gates
Sorrow flies far: see, here be all the pleasures,
That fancy can beget on youthful thoughts
When the fresh blood grows lively, and returns
Brisk as the April buds in primrose-season.
And first, behold this cordial julep here,
That flames and dances in his crystal bounds,
With spirits of balm and fragrant sirops mix'd:
Not that Nepenthes, which the wife of Thone
In Egypt gave to Jove-born Helena,
Is of such power to stir up joy as this,
To life so friendly, or so cool to thirst.
Why should you be so cruel to yourself,
And to those dainty limbs, which Nature lent
For gentle usage and soft delicacy?
But you invert the covenants of her trust,
And harshly deal, like an ill borrower,
With that which you receiv'd on other terms;
Scorning the unexempt condition,
By which all mortal frailty must subsist,
Refreshment after toil, ease after pain,
That have been tir'd all day without repast,
And timely rest have wanted; but, fair Virgin,
This will restore all soon.

Lad. 'Twill not, false traitor!
'Twill not restore the truth and honesty,
That thou hast banish'd from thy tongue with lies.

Was this the cottage, and the safe abode,
Thou told'st me of? What grim aspects are these,
These ugly-headed monsters? Mercy guard me!
Hence with thy brew'd enchantments, foul deceiver!
Hast thou betray'd my credulous innocence
With visor'd falsehood and base forgery?
And wouldst thou seek again to trap me here
With lickerish baits, fit to ensnare a brute?
Were it a draught for Juno when she banquets,
I would not taste thy treasonous offer; none
But such as are good men can give good things;
And that, which is not good, is not delicious
To a well-govern'd and wise appetite.

Com. O foolishness of men! that lend their ears
To those budge doctors of the Stoic fur,
And fetch their precepts from the Cynic tub,
Praising the lean and sallow Abstinence.
Wherefore did Nature pour her bounties forth
With such a full and unwithdrawing hand,
Covering the earth with odours, fruits, and flocks,
Thronging the seas with spawn innumerable,
But all to please and sate the curious taste?
And set to work millions of spinning worms,
That in their green shops weave the smooth-hair'd [silk,
To deck her sons; and, that no corner might
Be vacant of her plenty, in her own loins
She hutch'd the' all-worship'd ore, and precious [gems,
To store her children with: if all the world
Should in a pet of temperance feed on pulse,
Drink the clear stream, and nothing wear but frieze,
The' All-giver would be unthank'd, would be un-[prais'd,
Not half his riches known, and yet despis'd;
And we should serve him as a grudging master,
As a penurious niggard of his wealth;

And live like Nature's bastards, not her sons,
Who would be quite surcharg'd with her own weight,
And strangled with her waste fertility; [plumes,
The' earth cumber'd, and the wing'd air dark'd with
The herds would over-multitude their lords,
The sea o'erfraught would swell, and the unsought diamonds
Would so imblaze the forehead of the deep,
And so bestud with stars, that they below
Would grow inur'd to light, and come at last
To gaze upon the sun with shameless brows.
List, Lady; be not coy, and be not cozen'd
With that same vaunted name, Virginity.
Beauty is Nature's coin, must not be hoarded,
But must be current; and the good thereof
Consists in mutual and partaken bliss,
Unsavoury in the' enjoyment of itself:
If you let slip time, like a neglected rose
It withers on the stalk with languish'd head.
Beauty is Nature's brag, and must be shown
In courts, at feasts, and high solemnities,
Where most may wonder at the workmanship;
It is for homely features to keep home,
They had their name thence; coarse complexions,
And cheeks of sorry grain, will serve to ply
The sampler and to tease the housewife's wool.
What need a vermeil-tinctur'd lip for that,
Love-darting eyes, or tresses like the Morn?
There was another meaning in these gifts;
Think what, and be advis'd; you are but young yet.

Lad. I had not thought to have unlock'd my lips
In this unhallow'd air, but that this juggler
Would think to charm my judgment, as mine eyes,
Obtruding false rules prank'd in reason's garb.

I hate when Vice can bolt her arguments,
And Virtue has no tongue to check her pride.—
Impostor! do not charge most innocent Nature,
As if she would her children should be riotous
With her abundance; she, good cateress,
Means her provision only to the good,
That live according to her sober laws,
And holy dictate of spare Temperance:
If every just man, that now pines with want,
Had but a moderate and beseeming share
Of that which lewdly-pamper'd Luxury
Now heaps upon some few with vast excess,
Nature's full blessings would be well dispens'd
In unsuperfluous even proportion,
And she no whit incumber'd with her store;
And then the Giver would be better thank'd,
His praise due paid; for swinish Gluttony
Ne'er looks to Heaven amidst his gorgeous feast,
But with besotted base ingratitude
Crams, and blasphemes his Feeder. Shall I go on?
Or have I said enough? To him that dares
Arm his profane tongue with contemptuous words
Against the sun-clad power of Chastity,
Fain would I something say, yet to what end?
Thou hast nor ear, nor soul, to apprehend
The sublime notion and high mystery,
That must be utter'd to unfold the sage
And serious doctrine of Virginity;
And thou art worthy that thou shouldst not know
More happiness than this thy present lot.
Enjoy your dear wit, and gay rhetoric,
That hath so well been taught her dazzling fence;
Thou art not fit to hear thyself convinc'd:
Yet, should I try, the uncontrolled worth

Of this pure cause would kindle my rapt spirits
To such a flame of sacred vehemence,
That dumb things would be mov'd to sympathize,
And the brute Earth would lend her nerves and [shake,
Till all thy magic structures, rear'd so high,
Were shatter'd into heaps o'er thy false head.

Com. She fables not; I feel that I do fear
Her words set off by some superior power;
And though not mortal, yet a cold shuddering dew
Dips me all o'er, as when the wrath of Jove
Speaks thunder, and the chains of Erebus,
To some of Saturn's crew. I must dissemble,
And try her yet more strongly.—Come, no more;
This is mere moral babble, and direct
Against the canon laws of our foundation;
I must not suffer this; yet 'tis but the lees
And settlings of a melancholy blood:
But this will cure all straight; one sip of this
Will bathe the drooping spirits in delight,
Beyond the bliss of dreams. Be wise, and taste.—

The BROTHERS *rush in with swords drawn, wrest his glass out of his hand, and break it against the ground; his rout make sign of resistance, but are all driven in. The* ATTENDANT SPIRIT *comes in.*

SPIRIT.

What, have you let the false enchanter 'scape?
O ye mistook, ye should have snatch'd his wand,
And bound him fast; without his rod revers'd,
And backward mutters of dissevering power,
We cannot free the Lady that sits here
In stony fetters fix'd, and motionless:
Yet stay, be not disturb'd: now I bethink me,

Some other means I have which may be us'd,
Which once of Meliboeus old I learnt,
The soothest shepherd that e'er pip'd on plains.
There is a gentle Nymph not far from hence,
That with moist curb sways the smooth Severn stream,
Sabrina is her name, a virgin pure;
Whilom she was the daughter of Locrine,
That had the sceptre from his father Brute.
She, guiltless damsel, flying' the mad pursuit
Of her enraged stepdame Guendolen,
Commended her fair innocence to the flood,
That staid her flight with his cross-flowing course.
The water-nymphs, that in the bottom play'd,
Held up their pearled wrists, and took her in,
Bearing her straight to aged Nereus' hall;
Who, piteous of her woes, rear'd her lank head,
And gave her to his daughters to imbathe
In nectar'd lavers, strew'd with asphodel;
And through the porch and inlet of each sense
Drop'd in ambrosial oils, till she reviv'd,
And underwent a quick immortal change,
Made goddess of the river: still she retains
Her maiden gentleness, and oft at eve
Visits the herds along the twilight meadows,
Helping all urchin blasts, and ill-luck signs
That the shrewd meddling elf delights to make,
Which she with precious vial'd liquors heals;
For which the shepherds at their festivals
Carol her goodness loud in rustic lays,
And throw sweet garland wreaths into her stream
Of pansies, pinks, and gaudy daffodils.
And, as the old swain said, she can unlock
The clasping charm, and thaw the numbing spell,
If she be right invok'd in warbled song;

For maidenhood she loves, and will be swift
To aid a virgin, such as was herself,
In hard-besetting need; this will I try,
And add the power of some adjuring verse.

SONG.

Sabrina fair,
  Listen where thou art sitting
Under the glassy, cool, translucent wave,
  In twisted braids of lilies knitting
The loose train of thy amber-dropping hair;
  Listen for dear honour's sake,
  Goddess of the silver lake,
        Listen, and save.
Listen, and appear to us,
In name of great Oceanus;
By the' earth-shaking Neptune's mace,
And Tethys' grave majestic pace,
By hoary Nereus' wrinkled look,
And the Carpathian wizard's hook,
By scaly Triton's winding shell,
And old sooth-saying Glaucus' spell,
By Leucothea's lovely hands,
And her son that rules the strands,
By Thetis' tinsel-slipper'd feet,
And the songs of Siren's sweet,
By dead Parthenope's dear tomb,
And fair Ligea's golden comb,
Wherewith she sits on diamond rocks,
Sleeking her soft alluring locks;
By all the Nymphs that nightly dance
Upon thy streams with wily glance,
Rise, rise, and heave thy rosy head,
From thy coral-paven bed,

And bridle in thy headlong wave,
Till thou our summons answer'd have.
Listen, and save.

SABRINA *rises, attended by Water-Nymphs, and sings.*

By the rushy-fringed bank,
Where grows the willow and the osier dank,
My sliding chariot stays,
Thick set with agate, and the azure sheen
Of turkis blue, and emerald green,
That in the channel strays;
Whilst from off the waters fleet
Thus I set my printless feet
O'er the cowslip's velvet head,
That bends not as I tread;
Gentle Swain, at thy request,
I am here.
Sp. Goddess dear,
We implore thy powerful hand
To undo the charmed band
Of true virgin here distress'd,
Through the force, and through the wile,
Of unbless'd enchanter vile.
Sabr. Shepherd, 'tis my office best
To help ensnared chastity:
Brightest Lady, look on me;
Thus I sprinkle on thy breast
Drops, that from my fountain pure
I have kept, of precious cure;
Thrice upon thy finger's tip,
Thrice upon thy rubied lip:
Next this marble venom'd seat,
Smear'd with gums of glutinous heat,
I touch with chaste palms moist and cold:—
Now the spell hath lost his hold,

And I must haste, ere morning hour,
To wait in Amphitrite's bower.

SABRINA *descends, and the* LADY *rises out of her seat.*

Sp. Virgin, daughter of Locrine
Sprung of old Anchises' line,
May thy brimmed waves for this
Their full tribute never miss
From a thousand petty rills,
That tumble down the snowy hills:
Summer drouth, or singed air,
Never scorch thy tresses fair,
Nor wet October's torrent flood
Thy molten crystal fill with mud;
May thy billows roll ashore
The beryl and the golden ore;
May thy lofty head be crown'd
With many a tower and terrace round,
And here and there thy banks upon
With groves of myrrh and cinnamon.
Come, Lady, while Heaven lends us grace,
Let us fly this cursed place,
Lest the sorcerer us entice
With some other new device.
Not a waste or needless sound,
Till we come to holier ground;
I shall be your faithful guide
Through this gloomy covert wide,
And not many furlongs thence
Is your Father's residence,
Where this night are met in state
Many a friend to gratulate
His wish'd presence; and beside
All the swains, that there abide,

With jigs and rural dance resort;
We shall catch them at their sport,
And our sudden coming there
Will double all their mirth and cheer;
Come, let us haste, the stars grow high,
But night sits monarch yet in the mid sky.

The Scene changes, presenting Ludlow town and the President's castle; then come in Country Dancers, after them the ATTENDANT SPIRIT, *with the Two* BROTHERS, *and the* LADY.

SONG.

Sp. Back, Shepherds, back; enough your play,
Till next sun-shine holiday:
Here be, without duck or nod,
Other trippings to be trod
Of lighter toes, and such court guise
As Mercury did first devise,
With the mincing dryades,
On the lawns, and on the leas.

This second Song presents them to their Father and Mother.

Noble Lord, and Lady bright,
I have brought ye new delight;
Here behold so goodly grown
Three fair branches of your own;
Heaven hath timely tried their youth,
Their faith, their patience, and their truth,
And sent them here through hard assays
With a crown of deathless praise,
To triumph in victorious dance
O'er sensual Folly and Intemperance.

The Dances ended, the SPIRIT *epilogueises.*

Sp. To the ocean now I fly,
And those happy climes that lie
Where day never shuts his eye,
Up in the broad fields of the sky:
There I suck the liquid air
All amidst the gardens fair
Of Hesperus, and his daughters three
That sing about the golden tree:
Along the crisped shades and bowers
Revels the spruce and jocund Spring;
The Graces, and the rosy-bosom'd Hours,
Thither all their bounties bring;
There eternal Summer dwells,
And West-Winds, with musky wing,
About the cedar'd alleys fling
Nard and Cassia's balmy smells.
Iris there with humid bow
Waters the odorous banks, that blow
Flowers of more mingled hue
Than her purfled scarf can shew;
And drenches with Elysian dew
(List, mortals, if your ears be true)
Beds of hyacinth and roses,
Where young Adonis oft reposes,
Waxing well of his deep wound
In slumber soft, and on the ground
Sadly sits the' Assyrian queen:
But far above in spangled sheen
Celestial Cupid, her fam'd son, advanc'd,
Holds his dear Psyche sweet entranc'd,
After her wandering labours long,
Till free consent the gods among

Make her his eternal bride,
And from her fair unspotted side
Two blissful twins are to be born,
Youth and Joy; so Jove hath sworn.
  But now my task is smoothly done,
I can fly, or I can run,
Quickly to the green earth's end,
Where the bow'd welkin slow doth bend;
And from thence can soar as soon
To the corners of the moon.
  Mortals, that would follow me,
Love Virtue; she alone is free:
She can teach ye how to climb
Higher than the sphery chime;
Or if Virtue feeble were,
Heaven itself would stoop to her.

LYCIDAS.

In this MONODY, *the author bewails a learned friend,* unfortunately drowned in his passage from Chester on the Irish seas,* 1637: *and by occasion foretels the ruin of our corrupted clergy, then in their height.*

YET once more, O ye laurels, and once more,
Ye myrtles brown, with ivy never-sere,
I come to pluck your berries harsh and crude;
And, with forc'd fingers rude,
Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year:
Bitter constraint, and sad occasion dear,
Compels me to disturb your season due:
For Lycidas is dead, dead ere his prime,
Young Lycidas, and hath not left his peer:
Who would not sing for Lycidas? He knew
Himself to sing, and build the lofty rhyme.

*Edward King, Esq. the son of Sir John King, knight, secretary for Ireland. He was sailing from Chester to Ireland, on a visit to his friends in that country, when, in calm weather, not far from the English coast, the ship struck upon a rock, and suddenly sunk to the bottom with all that were on board, August 10, 1637. Mr. King was a fellow of Christ's College, Cambridge.

He must not float upon his watery bier
Unwept, and welter to the parching wind,
Without the meed of some melodious tear.
Begin then, Sisters of the sacred well,
That from beneath the seat of Jove doth spring;
Begin, and somewhat loudly sweep the string.
Hence with denial vain, and coy excuse:
So may some gentle Muse
With lucky words favour my destin'd urn;
And, as he passes, turn,
And bid fair peace be to my sable shroud.
For we were nurs'd upon the self-same hill,
Fed the same flock by fountain, shade, and rill.
Together both, ere the high lawns appear'd
Under the opening eye-lids of the morn,
We drove afield, and both together heard
What time the gray-fly winds her sultry horn,
Battening our flocks with the fresh dews of night,
Oft till the star, that rose, at evening, bright,
Tow'rd heaven's descent had slop'd his westering wheel.
Meanwhile the rural ditties were not mute,
Temper'd to the' oaten flute;
Rough Satyrs danc'd, and Fauns with cloven heel
From the glad sound would not be absent long;
And old Damœtas lov'd to hear our song.
But, O the heavy change, now thou art gone,
Now thou art gone, and never must return!
Thee, Shepherd, thee the woods, and desert caves
With wild thyme and the gadding vine o'ergrown,
And all their echoes mourn:
The willows, and the hazel copses green,
Shall now no more be seen
Fanning their joyous leaves to thy soft lays.
As killing as the canker to the rose,

Or taint-worm to the weanling-herds that graze,
Or frost to flowers, that their gay wardrobe wear,
When first the white-thorn blows;
Such, Lycidas, thy loss to shepherd's ear.

Where were ye, Nymphs, when the remorseless deep
Clos'd o'er the head of your lov'd Lycidas?
For neither were ye playing on the steep,
Where your old bards, the famous Druids, lie,
Nor on the shaggy top of Mona* high,
Nor yet where Deva† spreads her wizard stream:
Ay me! I fondly dream!
Had ye been there—for what could that have done?
What could the Muse herself that Orpheus bore,
The Muse herself, for her enchanting son,
Whom universal Nature did lament,
When, by the rout that made the hideous roar,
His gory visage down the stream was sent,
Down the swift Hebrus to the Lesbian shore?

Alas! what boots it with incessant care
To tend the homely, slighted, shepherd's trade,
And strictly meditate the thankless Muse?
Were it not better done, as others use,
To sport with Amaryllis in the shade,
Or with the tangles of Neæra's hair?
Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise
(That last infirmity of noble mind)
To scorn delights, and live laborious days;
But the fair guerdon when we hope to find,
And think to burst out into sudden blaze,
Comes the blind Fury with the' abhorred shears,

* The isles of Anglesey and of Man have both shared this title.
† The river Dee; the ancient boundary between England and Wales.

And slits the thin-spun life. 'But not the praise,'
Phœbus replied, and touch'd my trembling ears;
'Fame is no plant that grows on mortal soil,
Nor in the glistering foil,
Set off to' the world, nor in broad rumour lies;
But lives and spreads aloft by those pure eyes,
And perfect witness of all-judging Jove
As he pronounces lastly on each deed,
Of so much fame in Heaven expect thy meed.'
O fountain Arethuse, and thou honour'd flood,
Smooth-sliding Mincius,* crown'd with vocal reeds!
That strain I heard was of a higher mood:
But now my oat proceeds,
And listens to the herald of the sea
That came in Neptune's plea;
He ask'd the waves, and ask'd the felon winds,
What hard mishap hath doom'd this gentle swain?
And question'd every gust of rugged winds
That blows from off each beaked promontory:
They knew not of his story;
And sage Hippotades† their answer brings,
That not a blast was from his dungeon stray'd;
The air was calm, and on the level brine
Sleek Panope‡ with all her sisters play'd.
It was that fatal and perfidious bark,
Built in the' eclipse, and rigg'd with curses dark,
That sunk so low that sacred head of thine.
Next Camus, reverend sire, went footing slow,
His mantle hairy, and his bonnet sedge,
Inwrought with figures dim, and on the edge

* A river of Venetia, on whose banks Virgil was born.
† Eolus, the son of Hippotas.
‡ One of the Nereides, who was commonly invoked by mariners in storms.

Like to that sanguine flower inscrib'd with woe.
'Ah! who hath reft (quoth he) my dearest pledge?'
Last came, and last did go,
The pilot* of the Galilean lake;
Two massy keys he bore of metals twain,
(The golden opes, the iron shuts amain,)
He shook his miter'd locks, and stern bespake:
'How well could I have spar'd for thee, young swain,
Enow of such, as for their bellies' sake
Creep, and intrude, and climb into the fold?
Of other care they little reckoning make,
Than how to scramble at the shearers' feast,
And shove away the worthy bidden guest; [hold
Blind mouths! that scarce themselves know how to
A sheep-hook, or have learn'd aught else the least
That to the faithful herdman's art belongs? [sped;
What recks it them? What need they? They are,
And, when they list, their lean and flashy songs
Grate on their scrannel pipes of wretched straw;
The hungry sheep look up, and are not fed,
But, swoln with wind and the rank mist they draw,
Rot inwardly, and foul contagion spread:
Besides what the grim wolf with privy paw
Daily devours apace, and nothing said:
But that two-handed engine at the door
Stands ready to smite once, and smite no more.'
Return Alpheus, the dread voice is past,
That shrunk thy streams; return, Sicilian Muse,
And call the vales, and bid them hither cast
Their bells, and flowerets of a thousand hues.
Ye valleys low, where the mild whispers use
Of shades, and wanton winds, and gushing brooks,
On whose fresh lap the swart-star sparely looks;

* Saint Peter.

Throw hither all your quaint enamell'd eyes,
That on the green turf suck the honied showers,
And purple all the ground with vernal flowers.
Bring the rathe primrose that forsaken dies,
The tufted crow-toe, and pale jessamine,
The white pink, and the pansy freak'd with jet,
The glowing violet,
The musk-rose, and the well-attir'd woodbine,
With cowslips wan that hang the pensive head,
And every flower that sad embroidery wears:
Bid amaranthus all his beauty shed,
And daffadillies fill their cups with tears,
To strew the laureat herse where Lycid lies.
For, so to interpose a little ease,
Let our frail thoughts dally with false surmise;
Ay me! whilst thee the shores and sounding seas
Wash far away, where'er thy bones are hurl'd,
Whether beyond the stormy Hebrides,
Where thou perhaps, under the whelming tide,
Visit'st the bottom of the monstrous world;
Or whether thou, to our moist vows denied,
Sleep'st by the fable of Bellerus* old,
Where the great Vision of the guarded Mount,†
Looks tow'rd Namancos‡ and Bayona's hold;
Look homeward, Angel, now, and melt with ruth:
And, O ye dolphins, waft the hapless youth.

* A Cornish giant.

† Mount St. Michael; not far from the Land's End in Cornwall, whence at low water it is accessible. The *guarded* mount, says Mr. Warton, is simply the *fortified* mount; and the *great vision* is the famous apparition of St. Michael, who is said to have appeared on the top of the mount, and to have directed a church to be built there.

‡ Or Numantia; a town of Old Castile, once highly celebrated in the Spanish history. *Todd.*

Weep no more, woeful shepherds, weep no more,
For Lycidas your sorrow is not dead,
Sunk though he be beneath the watery floor.
So sinks the day-star in the ocean bed,
And yet anon uprears his drooping head,
And tricks his beams, and with new-spangled ore
Flames in the forehead of the morning sky:
So Lycidas sunk low, but mounted high, [waves;
Through the dear might of Him* that walk'd the
Where, other groves and other streams along,
With nectar pure his oozy locks he laves,
And hears the unexpressive nuptial song,
In the bless'd kingdoms meek of joy and love.
There entertain him all the saints above,
In solemn troops, and sweet societies,
That sing, and, singing, in their glory move,
And wipe the tears for ever from his eyes.
Now, Lycidas, the shepherds weep no more:
Henceforth thou art the genius of the shore,
In thy large recompence, and shalt be good
To all that wander in that perilous flood.
Thus sang the uncouth swain to the' oaks and rills,
While the still morn went out with sandals gray;
He touch'd the tender stops of various quills,
With eager thought warbling his Doric lay:
And now the sun had stretch'd o'er all the hills,
And now was dropt into the western bay;
At last he rose, and twitch'd his mantle blue:
To-morrow to fresh woods, and pastures new.

* A description of our Saviour.

L'ALLEGRO.

Hence loathed Melancholy,
Of Cerberus and blackest Midnight born,
In Stygian cave forlorn, [unholy!
'Mongst horrid shapes, and shrieks, and sights
Find out some uncouth cell, [wings,
Where brooding Darkness spreads his jealous
And the night-raven sings;
There, under ebon shades, and low-brow'd rocks,
As ragged as thy locks,
In dark Cimmerian desert ever dwell.
But come, thou goddess fair and free,
In Heaven yclep'd Euphrosyne,
And, by men, heart-easing Mirth;
Whom lovely Venus, at a birth,
With two sister-graces more,
To ivy-crowned Bacchus bore:
Or whether (as some sages sing)
The frolic wind, that breathes the spring,
Zephyr, with Aurora playing,
As he met her once a-Maying;
There, on beds of violets blue,
And fresh-blown roses wash'd in dew,
Fill'd her with thee, a daughter fair,
So buxom, blithe, and debonaire.

Haste thee, Nymph, and bring with thee
Jest, and youthful Jollity,
Quips, and cranks, and wanton wiles,
Nods, and becks, and wreathed smiles,
Such as hang on Hebe's cheek,
And love to live in dimple sleek;
Sport that wrinkled Care derides,
And Laughter holding both his sides.
Come, and trip it as you go,
On the light fantastic toe;
And in thy right hand lead with thee
The mountain-nymph, sweet Liberty;
And, if I give thee honour due,
Mirth, admit me of thy crew,
To live with her, and live with thee,
In unreproved pleasures free;
To hear the lark begin his flight,
And, singing, startle the dull night,
From his watch-tower in the skies,
Till the dappled dawn doth rise;
Then to come, in spite of sorrow,
And at my window bid good-morrow,
Through the sweet briar, or the vine,
Or the twisted eglantine:
While the cock, with lively din,
Scatters the rear of Darkness thin,
And to the stack, or the barn-door,
Stoutly struts his dames before:
Oft listening how the hounds and horn
Cheerly rouse the slumbering morn,
From the side of some hoar hill,
Through the high wood echoing shrill:
Some time walking, not unseen,
By hedge-row elms, on hillocks green,

Right against the eastern gate,
Where the grea sun begins his state,
Rob'd in flames and amber light,
The clouds in thousand liveries dight;
While the ploughman, near at hand,
Whistles o'er the furrow'd land,
And the milk-maid singeth blithe,
And the mower whets his scythe,
And every shepherd tells his tale,
Under the hawthorn in the dale.
Straight mine eye hath caught new pleasures,
Whilst the landscape round it measures;
Russet lawns, and fallows gray,
Where the nibbling flocks do stray,
Mountains, on whose barren breast
The labouring clouds do often rest;
Meadows trim, with daisies pied,
Shallow brooks, and rivers wide:
Towers and battlements it sees,
Bosom'd high in tufted trees,
Where, perhaps, some beauty lies,
The Cynosure of neighbouring eyes.
Hard by, a cottage-chimney smokes,
From betwixt two aged oaks,
Where Corydon and Thyrsis, met,
Are at their savoury dinner set,
Of herbs, and other country messes,
Which the neat-handed Phillis dresses;
And then in haste her bower she leaves,
With Thestylis to bind the sheaves;
Or, if the earlier season lead,
To the tan'd haycock in the mead.
  Sometimes, with secure delight,
The upland hamlets will invite,

When the merry bells ring round,
And the jocund rebecs sound
To many a youth, and many a maid,
Dancing in the checquer'd shade;
And young and old come forth to play,
On a sun-shine holy-day,
Till the live-long day-light fail:
Then to the spicy nut-brown ale,
With stories told of many a feat,
How faery Mab the junkets eat:
She was pinch'd and pull'd, she said;
And he, by friar's lantern led,
Tells how the drudging goblin sweat,
To earn his cream-bowl, duly set,
When in one night, ere glimpse of morn,
His shadowy flail hath thresh'd the corn,
That ten day-labourers could not end;
Then lies him down, the lubber fiend,
And, stretch'd out all the chimney's length,
Basks at the fire his hairy strength;
And, crop-full, out of doors he flings,
Ere the first cock his matin rings.
  Thus done the tales, to bed they creep,
By whispering winds soon lull'd asleep.
Tower'd cities please us then,
And the busy hum of men,
Where throngs of knights and barons bold,
In weeds of peace, high triumphs hold,
With store of ladies, whose bright eyes
Rain influence, and judge the prize
Of wit, or arms, while both contend
To win her grace, whom all commend.
There let Hymen oft appear,
In saffron robe, with taper clear,

And pomp, and feast, and revelry,
With mask and antique pageantry;
Such sights as youthful poets dream,
On summer eves, by haunted stream.
Then to the well-trod stage anon,
If Jonson's learned sock be on;
Or sweetest Shakspeare, Fancy's child,
Warble his native wood-notes wild.
And ever, against eating cares,
Lap me in soft Lydian airs,
Married to immortal verse;
Such as the meeting soul may pierce,
In notes, with many a winding bout
Of linked sweetness, long drawn out,
With wanton heed, and giddy cunning;
The melting voice through mazes running,
Untwisting all the chains that tie
The hidden soul of harmony;
That Orpheus' self may heave his head,
From golden slumber, on a bed
Of heap'd Elysian flowers, and hear
Such strains as would have won the ear
Of Pluto, to have quite set free
His half-regain'd Eurydice.
These delights if thou canst give,
Mirth, with thee I mean to live.

IL PENSEROSO.

Hence, vain deluding Joys,
The brood of Folly without father bred!
How little you bested,
  Or fill the fixed mind with all your toys!
Dwell in some idle brain,
  And fancies fond with gaudy shapes possess,
As thick and numberless
As the gay motes that people the sun-beams;
Or likest hovering dreams,
  The fickle pensioners of Morpheus' train.
But hail thou goddess, sage and holy,
Hail, divinest Melancholy!
Whose saintly visage is too bright
To hit the sense of human sight,
And therefore to our weaker view
O'erlaid with black, staid Wisdom's hue;
Black, but such as in esteem
Prince Memnon's sister might beseem,
Or that starr'd Ethiop queen, that strove
To set her beauty's praise above
The Sea-Nymphs, and their powers offended;
Yet thou art higher far descended:
Thee bright-hair'd Vesta, long of yore,
To solitary Saturn bore;

His daughter she; in Saturn's reign,
Such mixture was not held a stain:
Oft in glimmering bowers and glades
He met her, and in secret shades
Of woody Ida's inmost grove,
Whilst yet there was no fear of Jove.
  Come, pensive Nun, devout and pure,
Sober, stedfast, and demure,
All in a robe of darkest grain,
Flowing with majestic train,
And sable stole of Cyprus lawn,
Over thy decent shoulders drawn.
Come, but keep thy wonted state,
With even step, and musing gait;
And looks commercing with the skies,
Thy rapt soul sitting in thine eyes:
There, held in holy passion still,
Forget thyself to marble, till
With a sad leaden downward cast
Thou fix them on the earth as fast:
And join with thee calm Peace, and Quiet,
Spare Fast, that oft with Gods doth diet,
And hears the Muses in a ring
Aye round about Jove's altar sing;
And add to these retired Leisure,
That in trim gardens takes his pleasure:
But first, and chiefest, with thee bring,
Him that yon soars on golden wing,
Guiding the fiery-wheeled throne,
The cherub Contemplation;
And the mute Silence hiss'd along,
'Less Philomel will deign a song,
In her sweetest saddest plight,
Smoothing the rugged brow of Night,

While Cynthia checks her dragon yoke,
Gently o'er the' accustom'd oak:
Sweet bird, that shun'st the noise of folly,
Most musical, most melancholy!
Thee, chauntress, oft, the woods among,
I woo, to hear thy even-song;
And, missing thee, I walk unseen
On the dry smooth-shaven green,
To behold the wandering moon,
Riding near her highest noon,
Like one that had been led astray
Through the heaven's wide pathless way;
And oft, as if her head she bow'd,
Stooping through a fleecy cloud.
Oft, on a plat of rising ground,
I hear the far-off curfew sound,
Over some wide-water'd shore,
Swinging slow with sullen roar:
Or, if the air will not permit,
Some still removed place will fit,
Where glowing embers through the room
Teach light to counterfeit a gloom;
Far from all resort of mirth,
Save the cricket on the hearth,
Or the belman's drowsy charm,
To bless the doors from nightly harm.
Or let my lamp, at midnight hour,
Be seen in some high lonely tower,
Where I may oft out-watch the Bear,
With thrice-great Hermes, or unsphere
The spirit of Plato, to unfold
What worlds or what vast regions hold
The' immortal mind, that hath forsook
Her mansion in this fleshly nook:

And of those Demons that are found
In fire, air, flood, or under ground,
Whose power hath a true consent
With planet or with element.
Sometime let gorgeous Tragedy
In scepter'd pall come sweeping by,
Presenting Thebes, or Pelops' line,
Or the tale of Troy divine;
Or what (though rare) of later age
Ennobled hath the buskin'd stage.
  But, O sad Virgin, that thy power
Might raise Musæus from his bower!
Or bid the soul of Orpheus sing
Such notes, as, warbled to the string,
Drew iron tears down Pluto's cheek,
And made Hell grant what love did seek!
Or call up him that left half-told
The story of Cambuscan bold,
Of Camball, and of Algarsife,
And who had Canace to wife,
That own'd the virtuous ring and glass;
And of the wondrous horse of brass,
On which the Tartar king did ride:
And if aught else great bards beside
In sage and solemn tunes have sung,
Of turneys, and of trophies hung,
Of forests, and enchantments drear,
Where more is meant than meets the ear.
  Thus, Night, oft see me in thy pale career,
Till civil-suited Morn appear;
Not trick'd and frounc'd as she was wont
With the Attic boy to hunt,
But kercheft in a comely cloud,
While rocking winds are piping loud,

Or usher'd with a shower still,
When the gust hath blown his fill,
Ending on the russling leaves,
With minute drops from off the eaves:
And, when the sun begins to fling
His flaring beams, me, Goddess, bring
To arched walks of twilight groves,
And shadows brown, that Sylvan loves,
Of pine, or monumental oak,
Where the rude axe, with heaved stroke
Was never heard the Nymphs to daunt,
Or fright them from their hallow'd haunt.
There in close covert by some brook,
Where no profaner eye may look,
Hide me from day's garish eye,
While the bee with honied thigh,
That at her flowery work doth sing,
And the waters murmuring,
With such consort as they keep,
Entice the dewy-feather'd Sleep;
And let some strange mysterious Dream
Wave at his wings in aery stream
Of lively portraiture display'd,
Softly on my eye-lids laid.
And, as I wake, sweet music breathe
Above, about, or underneath,
Sent by some Spirit to mortals good,
Or the' unseen Genius of the wood.
But let my due feet never fail
To walk the studious cloisters pale,
And love the high-embowed roof,
With antique pillars massy proof,
And storied windows richly dight,
Casting a dim religious light:

There let the pealing organ blow,
To the full-voic'd quire below,
In service high, and anthems clear,
As may with sweetness, through mine ear,
Dissolve me into ecstacies,
And bring all heaven before mine eyes!
  And may at last my weary age
Find out the peaceful hermitage,
The hairy gown and mossy cell,
Where I may sit and rightly spell
Of every star that heaven doth shew,
And every herb that sips the dew;
Till old experience do attain
To something like prophetic strain.
  These pleasures, Melancholy, give,
And I with thee will choose to live.

ARCADES.

Part of an entertainment presented to the Countess Dowager of Derby at Harefield, by some noble persons of her family; who appear on the scene in pastoral habit, moving toward the seat of state, with this Song.

1. SONG.

LOOK, Nymphs and Shepherds, look,
What sudden blaze of majesty
Is that which we from hence descry,
Too divine to be mistook:
This, this is she
To whom our vows and wishes bend;
Here our solemn search hath end.

Fame, that, her high worth to raise,
Seem'd erst so lavish and profuse,
We may justly now accuse
Of detraction from her praise;
Less than half we find express'd,
Envy bid conceal the rest.

Mark, what radiant state she spreads,
In circle round her shining throne,
Shooting her beams like silver threads;
This, this is she alone,
Sitting like a goddess bright,
In the centre of her light.

Might she the wise Latona be,
Or the tower'd Cybele,
Mother of a hundred gods?
Juno dares not give her odds:
  Who had thought this clime had held
  A deity so unparallel'd?

As they come forward, the GENIUS *of the wood appears, and turning towards them, speaks.*

GENIUS.

STAY, gentle swains; for, though in this disguise,
I see bright honour sparkle through your eyes;
Of famous Arcady ye are, and sprung
Of that renowned flood, so often sung,
Divine Alphéus, who by secret sluice
Stole under seas to meet his Arethuse;
And ye, the breathing roses of the wood,
Fair silver-buskin'd Nymphs, as great and good;
I know, this quest of yours, and free intent,
Was all in honour and devotion meant
To the great mistress of yon princely shrine,
Whom with low reverence I adore as mine;
And, with all helpful service will comply
To further this night's glad solemnity;
And lead ye, where ye may more near behold
What shallow-searching Fame hath left untold;
Which I full oft, amidst these shades alone,
Have sat to wonder at, and gaze upon:
For know, by lot from Jove, I am the Power
Of this fair wood, and live in oaken bower,
To nurse the saplings tall, and curl the grove
With ringlets quaint, and wanton windings wove.
And all my plants I save from nightly ill
Of noisome winds, and blasting vapours chill:

And from the boughs brush off the evil dew,
And heal the harms of thwarting thunder blue,
Or what the cross dire-looking planet smites,
Or hurtful worm with canker'd venom bites.
When evening gray doth rise, I fetch my round
Over the mount, and all this hallow'd ground;
And early, ere the odorous breath of morn
Awakes the slumbering leaves, or tassel'd horn
Shakes the high thicket, haste I all about,
Number my ranks, and visit every sprout
With puissant words, and murmurs made to bless:
But else in deep of night, when drowsiness
Hath lock'd up mortal sense, then listen I
To the celestial Syren's harmony,
That sit upon the nine infolded spheres,
And sing to those that hold the vital shears,
And turn the adamantine spindle round,
On which the fate of Gods and men is wound.
Such sweet compulsion doth in music lie,
To lull the daughters of Necessity,
And keep unsteady Nature to her law,
And the low world in measur'd motion draw
After the heavenly tune, which none can hear
Of human mould, with gross unpurged ear;
And yet such music worthiest were to blaze
The peerless height of her immortal praise,
Whose lustre leads us, and for her most fit,
If my inferior hand or voice could hit
Inimitable sounds: yet, as we go,
Whate'er the skill of lesser gods can show,
I will assay, her worth to celebrate,
And so attend ye toward her glittering state;
Where ye may all, that are of noble stem,
Approach, and kiss her sacred vesture's hem.

II. SONG.

O'ER the smooth enamell'd green,
Where no print of step hath been,
Follow me, as I sing
And touch the warbled string,
Under the shady roof
Of branching elm star-proof.
Follow me;
I will bring you where she sits,
Clad in splendour, as befits
Her deity.
Such a rural Queen
All Arcadia hath not seen.

III. SONG.

NYMPHS and Shepherd, dance no more
By sandy Ladon's lilied banks;
On old Lycæus, or Cyllene hoar,
Trip no more in twilight ranks;
Though Erymanth your loss deplore,
A better soil shall give ye thanks.
From the stony Mænalus
Bring your flocks, and live with us;
Here ye shall have greater grace,
To serve the Lady of this place.
Though Syrinx your Pan's mistress were,
Yet Syrinx well might wait on her.
Such a rural Queen
All Arcadia hath not seen.

SONNETS.

I.

TO THE NIGHTINGALE.

O NIGHTINGALE, that on yon bloomy spray
Warblest at eve, when all the woods are still;
Thou with fresh hope the lover's heart dost fill,
While the' jolly Hours lead on propitious May.
Thy liquid notes that close the eye of day,
First heard before the shallow cuckoo's bill,
Portend success in love; O, if Jove's will
Have link'd that amorous power to thy soft lay,
Now timely sing, ere the rude bird of hate
Foretel my hopeless doom in some grove nigh;
As thou from year to year hast sung too late
For my relief, yet hadst no reason why:
Whether the Muse, or Love, call thee his mate,
Both them I serve, and of their train am I.

II.

DONNA leggiadra, il cui bel nome honora
L' herbosa val di Rheno, e il nobil varco;
Bene è colui d'ogni valore scarco
Qual tuo spirto gentil non innamora;
Che dolcemente mostra si di fuora
De sui atti soavi giamai parco,
E i don', che son d'amor saette ed arco,
La onde l' alta tua virtu s'infiora.
Quando tu vaga parli, o lieta canti

Che mover possa duro alpestre legno,
Guardi ciascun a gli occhi, ed a gli orecchi
L'entrata, chi di te si trouva indegno;
Gratia sola di su gli vaglia, inanti
Che'l disio amoroso al cuor s'invecchi.

III.

Qual in colle aspro, al imbrunir di sera
L'avezza giovinetta pastorella
Va bagnando l'herbetta strana e bella
Che mal si spande a disusata spera
Fuor di sua natia alma primavera,
Cosi Amor meco insù la lingua snella
Desta il fior novo di strania favella,
Mentre io di te, vezzosamente altera,
Canto, dal mio buon popol non inteso
E'l bel Tamigi cangio col bel Arno.
Amor lo volse, ed io a l'altrui peso
Seppi ch' Amor cosa mai volse indarno.
Deh! foss'il mio cuor lento e'l duro seno
A chi pianta dal ciel si buon terreno.

CANZONE.

Ridonsi donne e giovani amorosi
M' accostandosi attorno, e perche scrivi,
Perche tu scrivi in lingua ignota e strana
Verseggiando d' amor, e comte t'osi?
Dinni, se la tua speme sia mai vana,
E de pensieri lo miglior t'arrivi;
Cosi mi van burlando, altri rivi
Altri lidi t'aspettan, ed altre onde
Nelle cui verdi sponde
Spuntati ad hor, ad hor a la tua chioma
L'immortal guiderdon d' eterne frondi

Perche alle spalle tue soverchia soma?
  Canzon dirotti, e tu per me respondi
Dice mia Donna, e'l suo dir, é il mio cuore
Qesta e lingua di cui si vanta Amore.

IV.

Diodati, e te'l dirò con maraviglia,
  Quel ritroso io ch'amor spreggiar soléa
  E de suoi lacci spesso mi ridéa
  Gia caddi, ov' huom dabben talhor s'impiglia.
Ne treccie d'oro, ne guancia vermiglia
  M'abbaglian sì, ma sotto nova idea
  Pellegrina bellezza che'l cuor bea,
  Portamenti alti honesti, e nelle ciglia
Quel sereno fulgor d'amabil nero,
  Parole adorne di lingua piu d'una,
  E'l cantar che di mezzo l'hemispero
Traviar ben puo la faticosa Luna,
  E degli occhi suoi auventa si gran fuoco
  Che l'incerar gli orecchi mi fia poco.

V.

Per certo i bei vostr'occhi, Donna mia
  Esser non puo che non sian lo mio sole
  Si mi percuoton forte, come ei suole
  Per l'arene di Libia chi s'invia,
Mentre un caldo vapor (ne sentì pria)
  Da quel lato si spinge ove mi duole,
  Che forse amanti nelle lor parole
  Chiaman sospir; io non so che si sia:
Parte rinchiusa, e turbida si cela
  Scosso mi il petto, e poi n'uscendo poco
  Quivi d' attorno o s'agghiaccia, o s'ingiela;
Ma quanto a gli occhi giunge a trovar loco
  Tutte le notti a me suol far piovose
  Finche mia Alba rivien colmi di rose.

VI.

Giovane piano, e semplicette amante
  Poi che fuggir me stesso in dubbio sono,
  Madonna a voi del mio cuor l'humil dono
  Farò divoto; io certo a prove tante,
L'hebbi fedele, intrepido, costante,
  De pensieri leggiadro, accorto, e buono;
  Quando rugge il gran mondo, e scocca il tuono,
  S'arma di se, e d' intero diamante:
Tanto del forse, e d' invidia sicuro,
  Di timori, e speranze, al popol use,
  Quanto d'ingegno, e d'alto valor vago,
E di cetta sonora, e delle muse:
  Sol troverete in tal parte men duro,
  Ove Amor mise l'insanabil ago.

VII.

ON HIS BEING ARRIVED TO THE AGE OF 23*.

How soon hath Time, the subtle thief of youth,
  Stol'n on his wing my three and twentieth year!
  My hasting days fly on with full career,
  But my late spring no bud or blossom shew'th.
Perhaps my semblance might deceive the truth,
  That I to manhood am arriv'd so near;
  And inward ripeness doth much less appear,
  That some more timely-happy spirits endu'th.
Yet be it less or more, or soon or slow,
  It shall be still in strictest measure even
  To that same lot, however mean or high,
Tow'rd which Time leads me, and the Will of [Heaven;
  All is, if I have grace to use it so,
As ever in my great Task-Master's eye.

* Written at Cambridge in 1631, and sent in a letter to a friend, who had importuned Milton to take orders.

VIII.

WHEN THE ASSAULT WAS INTENDED TO THE CITY*.

CAPTAIN, or Colonel, or Knight in arms,
Whose chance on these defenceless doors may seize,
If deed of honour did thee ever please,
Guard them, and him within protect from harms.
He can requite thee; for he knows the charms
That call Fame on such gentle acts as these,
And he can spread thy name o'er lands and seas,
Whatever clime the sun's bright circle warms.
Lift not thy spear against the Muses' bower:
The great Emathian conqueror bid spare
The house of Pindarus, when temple' and tower
Went to the ground; and the repeated air
Of sad Electra's poet had the power
To save the' Athenian walls from ruin bare.

IX.

TO A VIRTUOUS YOUNG LADY.

LADY, that in the prime of earliest youth
Wisely hast shun'd the broad way and the green,
And with those few art eminently seen,
That labour up the hill of heavenly truth;
The better part with Mary and with Ruth
Chosen thou hast; and they that overween,
And at thy growing virtues fret their spleen,
No anger find in thee, but pity' and ruth.
Thy care is fix'd, and zealously attends
To fill thy odorous lamp with deeds of light,

* In 1642; the King's army having arrived at Brentford, and thrown the city of London into great consternation.

And hope that reaps not shame. Therefore be sure
Thou, when the bridegroom with his feastful friends
Passes to bliss at the mid hour of night,
Hast gain'd thy entrance, Virgin wise and pure.

X.

TO THE LADY MARGARET LEY*.

DAUGHTER to that good Earl, once President
Of England's Council and her Treasury,
Who liv'd in both, unstain'd with gold or fee,
And left them both, more in himself content,
Till the sad breaking of that Parliament
Broke him, as that dishonest victory
At Chæronea, fatal to liberty,
Kill'd with report that old man eloquent.†
Though later born than to have known the days
Wherein your father flourish'd, yet by you,
Madam, methinks I see him living yet;
So well your words his noble virtues praise,
That all both judge you to relate them true,
And to possess them, honour'd Margaret.

* The daughter of Sir James Ley, whose singular learning and abilities raised him through all the great posts of the law, till he came to be made Earl of Marlborough, and Lord High Treasurer, and Lord President of the Council to King James I. He died in an advanced age; and Milton attributes his death to *the breaking of the Parliament*: and it is true that the Parliament was dissolved the 10th of March 1628-9, and he died on the 14th of the same month. *Newton.*

† Isocrates, the orator. The Victory was gained by Philip of Macedon over the Athenians. *Warton.*

XI.

ON THE DETRACTION WHICH FOLLOWED UPON MY WRITING CERTAIN TREATISES. 1645.

A BOOK was writ of late call'd Tetrachordon,*
And woven close, both matter, form, and style;
The subject new: it walk'd the Town awhile,
Numbering good intellects; now seldom por'd on.
Cries the stall-reader, 'Bless us! what a word on
A title-page is this!' and some in file
Stand spelling false, while one might walk to Mile-
End Green. Why is it harder, Sirs, than Gordon,
Colkitto, or Macdonnel, or Galasp?† [sleek,
Those rugged names to our like mouths grow
That would have made Quintilian stare and gasp,
Thy age, like ours, O soul of Sir John Cheek,‡
Hated not learning worse than toad or asp,
When thou taught'st Cambridge, and King Edward, Greek.

* This was one of Milton's books, published in consequence of his divorce from his first wife. *Tetrachordon* signifies Expositions on the four chief places in Scripture which mention marriage, or nullities in marriage. *Warton.*

† Milton is here collecting, from his hatred to the Scots, what he thinks Scotish names of an ill sound. *Colkitto and Macdonnel*, are one and the same person; a brave officer on the royal side, an Irishman of the Antrim family, who served under Montrose. The *Macdonalds* of that family are styled, by way of distinction. *Mac Colkittoh*, i. e. descendants of lame Colin. *Galasp*, or *George Gillespie*, was a Scotish writer against the Independents, and one of the members of the Assembly of Divines. *Warton.*

‡ The first professor of the Greek tongue in the university of Cambridge, and was afterwards made one of the tutors to Edward VI. See his Life by Strype, or in the *Biographia Britannica.* *Newton.*

XII.

ON THE SAME.

I did but prompt the age to quit their clogs
By the known rules of ancient liberty,
When straight a barbarous noise environs me
Of owls and cuckoos, asses, apes and dogs:
As when those hinds that were transform'd to frogs
Rail'd at Latona's twin-born progeny,
Which after held the sun and moon in fee.
But this is got by casting pearl to hogs;
That bawl for freedom in their senseless mood,
And still revolt when truth would set them free.
License they mean when they cry Liberty;
For who loves that, must first be wise and good:
But from that mark how far they rove we see,
For all this waste of wealth, and loss of blood.

XIII.

TO MR. H. LAWES, ON THE PUBLISHING HIS AIRS.

Written 1645.

Harry, whose tuneful and well-measur'd song
First taught our English music how to span
Words with just note and accent, not to scan
With Midas' ears, committing short and long;
Thy worth and skill exempts thee from the throng,
With praise enough for Envy to look wan;
To after age thou shalt be writ the man,
That with smooth air could humour best our tongue.

Thou honour'st verse, and verse must lend her wing
To honour thee, the priest of Phœbus' quire,
That tun'st their happiest lines in hymn, or story.
Dante shall give Fame leave to set thee higher
Than his Casella, whom he woo'd to sing,
Met in the milder shades of Purgatory.

XIV.

ON THE RELIGIOUS MEMORY OF MRS. CATHERINE THOMSON, MY CHRISTIAN FRIEND.

Deceased, Dec. 16, 1646.*

When Faith and Love, which parted from thee never,
Had ripen'd thy just soul to dwell with God,
Meekly thou didst resign this earthly load
Of death, call'd life; which us from life doth sever.
Thy works, and alms, and all thy good endeavour,
Staid not behind, nor in the grave were trod;
But, as Faith pointed with her golden rod,
Follow'd thee up to joy and bliss for ever.
Love led them on, and Faith, who knew them best
Thy hand-maids, clad them o'er with purple beams
And azure wings, that up they flew so dress'd,
And spake the truth of thee on glorious themes
Before the Judge; who thenceforth bid thee rest,
And drink thy fill of pure immortal streams.

* Dr. Newton found in the accounts of Milton's life, that when he was first made Latin Secretary, he lodged at one Thomson's, next door to the Bull Head Tavern, at Charing Cross. This Mrs. Thomson was in all probability one of that family.

XV.

TO THE LORD GENERAL FAIRFAX.

Written 1648.

FAIRFAX, whose name in arms through Europe rings,
  Filling each mouth with envy or with praise,
  And all her jealous monarchs with amaze
  And rumours loud, that daunt remotest kings;
Thy firm unshaken virtue ever brings
  Victory home, though new rebellions raise
  Their Hydra heads, and the false north displays
  Her broken league to imp their serpent wings.
O yet a nobler task awaits thy hand,
  (For what can war, but endless war still breed?)
  Till truth and right from violence be freed,
And public faith clear'd from the shameful brand
  Of public fraud. In vain doth Valour bleed,
  While Avarice and Rapine share the land.

XVI.

TO THE LORD GENERAL CROMWELL.

Written 1652.

CROMWELL, our chief of men, who through a cloud,
  Not of war only, but detractions rude,
  Guided by faith and matchless fortitude,
  To peace and truth thy glorious way hast plough'd,
And on the neck of crowned Fortune proud
  Hast rear'd God's trophies, and his work pursued,
  While Derwen stream, with blood of Scots imbrued,

And Dunbar field resounds thy praises loud,
And Worcester's laureat wreath. Yet much remains
To conquer still: Peace hath her victories
No less renown'd than War: new foes arise
Threat'ning to bind our souls with secular chains:
Help us to save free conscience from the paw
Of hireling wolves, whose gospel is their maw.

XVII.

TO SIR HENRY VANE THE YOUNGER.*

VANE, young in years, but in sage counsel old,
Than whom a better senator ne'er held
The helm of Rome, when gowns, not arms, repell'd
The fierce Epirot and the' African bold;
Whether to settle peace, or to unfold
The drift of hollow States hard to be spell'd;
Then to advise how War may, best upheld,
Move by her two main nerves, iron and gold,
In all her equipage: besides to know
Both spiritual power and civil, what each means,
What severs each, thou' hast learn'd, which few have done:
The bounds of either sword to thee we owe:
Therefore on thy firm hand religion leans
In peace, and reckons thee her eldest son.

* Sir Henry Vane the younger was the chief of the independents, and therefore Milton's friend. He was the contriver of the Solemn League and Covenant. In the pamphlets of that age he is called Sir *Humerous Vanity*. He was beheaded in 1662.

XVIII.

ON THE LATE MASSACRE IN PIEDMONT, 1655.

Avenge, O Lord, thy slaughter'd saints, whose bones
Lie scatter'd on the Alpine mountains cold;
Ev'n them who kept thy truth so pure of old,
When all our fathers worship'd stocks and stones,
Forget not: in thy book record their groans
Who were thy sheep, and in their ancient fold
Slain by the bloody Piedmontese, that roll'd
Mother with infant down the rocks. Their moans
The vales redoubled to the hills, and they
To Heav'n. Their martyr'd blood and ashes sow
O'er all the' Italian fields, where still doth sway
The triple Tyrant; that from these may grow
A hundred fold, who having learn'd thy way,
Early may fly the Babylonian woe.

XIX.

ON HIS BLINDNESS.

When I consider how my light is spent
Ere half my days, in this dark world and wide,
And that one talent which is death to hide,
Lodg'd with me useless, though my soul more bent
To serve therewith my Maker, and present
My true account, lest he, returning, chide,
"Doth God exact day-labour, light denied?"
I fondly ask: but, Patience, to prevent

That murmur, soon replies, 'God doth not need
Either man's work, or his own gifts; who best
Bear his mild yoke, they serve him best: his state
Is kingly; thousands at his bidding speed,
And post o'er land and ocean without rest;
They also serve who only stand and wait.'

XX.

TO MR. LAWRENCE.

LAWRENCE, of virtuous father virtuous son,*
Now that the fields are dank, and ways are mire,
Where shall we sometimes meet, and by the fire
Help waste a sullen day, what may be won
From the hard season gaining? Time will run
On smoother, till Favonius re-inspire
The frozen earth, and clothe in fresh attire
The lily' and rose, that neither sow'd nor spun.
What neat repast shall feast us, light and choice,
Of Attic taste, with wine, whence we may rise
To hear the lute well touch'd, or artful voice
Warble immortal notes and Tuscan air?
He who of those delights can judge, and spare
To interpose them oft, is not unwise.

* The *virtuous son* was author of a work 'Of our Communion and War with Angels,' printed in 1646. The *father* was member for Herefordshire, in the little Parliament which began in 1653, and was active in settling the protectorate of Cromwell; by whom he was made president of his Council.

XXI.

TO CYRIAC SKINNER.*

Cyriac, whose grandsire, on the royal bench
  Of British Themis, with no mean applause
  Pronounc'd, and in his volumes taught, our laws,
  Which others at their bar so often wrench;
To-day deep thoughts resolve with me to drench
  In mirth that, after, no repenting draws;
  Let Euclid rest, and Archimedes pause,
And what the Swede intends, and what the French:
To measure life learn thou betimes, and know
  Tow'rd solid good what leads the nearest way;
  For other things mild heaven a time ordains,
And disapproves that care, though wise in show,
  That with superfluous burden loads the day,
And, when God sends a cheerful hour, refrains.

XXII.

TO THE SAME.

Cyriac, this three-years-day these eyes, though
  To outward view, of blemish or of spot, [clear,
  Bereft of light, their seeing have forgot;
  Nor to their idle orbs doth sight appear
Of sun, or moon, or star, throughout the year,

* Cyriac Skinner was one of the principal members of Harrington's political club. Wood says, that he was 'an ingenious young gentleman, and scholar to John Milton.'

Or man, or woman. Yet I argue not
Against Heaven's hand or will, nor bate a jot
Of heart or hope; but still bear up and steer
Right onward. What supports me, dost thou ask?
The conscience, Friend, to' have lost them over-
In liberty's defence, my noble task, [plied
Of which all Europe rings from side to side.
This thought might lead me through the world's vain mask
Content, though blind, had I no better guide.

XXIII.

ON HIS DECEASED WIFE.*

Methought I saw my late espoused saint
Brought to me, like Alcestis, from the grave,
Whom Jove's great son to her glad husband gave,
Rescued from death by force, tho' pale and faint.
Mine, as whom wash'd from spot of child-bed taint
Purification in the' old Law did save,
And such, as yet once more I trust to have
Full sight of her in Heaven without restraint,
Came vested all in white, pure as her mind:
Her face was veil'd; yet to my fancied sight
Love, sweetness, goodness, in her person shin'd
So clear, as in no face with more delight:
But O! as to embrace me she inclin'd,
I wak'd; she fled; and day brought back my night.

* This sonnet was written about the year 1656, on the death of his second wife, Catharine, the daughter of Captain Woodcock, of Hackney, a rigid sectarist. She died in child-bed of a daughter, within a year after their marriage. Milton had now been long totally blind.

ODES.

ON THE

MORNING

OF

CHRIST'S NATIVITY.*

WRITTEN IN 1629.

THIS is the month, and this the happy morn
Wherein the Son of Heaven's Eternal King,
Of wedded maid and virgin mother born,
Our great redemption from above did bring;
For so the holy sages once did sing,
  That he our deadly forfeit should release,
And with his Father work us a perpetual peace.

That glorious form, that light unsufferable,
And that far-beaming blaze of majesty,
Wherewith he wont at Heaven's high council-table
To sit the midst of Trinal-Unity,
He laid aside; and, here with us to be,

* This Ode, in which the many learned allusions are highly poetical, was probably composed as a college exercise at Cambridge, our author being now only twenty-one years old. *Warton.*

Forsook the courts of everlasting day,
And chose with us a darksome house of mortal clay.

Say, heavenly muse, shall not thy sacred vein
Afford a present to the Infant-God?
Hast thou no verse, no hymn, or solemn strain,
To welcome him to this his new abode,
Now while the heaven, by the sun's team untrod,
Hath took no print of the approaching light,
And all the spangled host keep watch in squadrons bright?

See, how from far, upon the eastern road,
The star-led wizards haste with odours sweet:
O run, prevent them with thy humble ode,
And lay it lowly at his blessed feet;
Have thou the honour first thy Lord to greet,
And join thy voice unto the angel-quire,
From out his secret altar touch'd with hallow'd fire.

THE HYMN.

It was the winter wild,
While the heaven-born child,
All meanly wrapt, in the rude manger lies;
Nature, in awe to him,
Had doff'd her gaudy trim,
With her great Master so to sympathize:
It was no season then for her
To wanton with the sun, her lusty paramour.

Only with speeches fair
She wooes the gentle air

To hide her guilty front with innocent snow;
And on her naked shame,
Pollute with sinful blame,
The saintly veil of maiden white to throw;
Confounded, that her Maker's eyes
Should look so near upon her foul deformities.

But he, her fears to cease,
Sent down the meek-eyed Peace;
She, crown'd with olive green, came softly sliding
Down through the turning sphere,
His ready harbinger,
With turtle wing the amorous clouds dividing;
And, waving wide her myrtle wand,
She strikes an universal peace through sea and land.

No war, or battle's sound,
Was heard the world around:
The idle spear and shield were high up hung;
The hooked chariot stood
Unstain'd with hostile blood;
The trumpet spake not to the armed throng;
And kings sat still with awful eye,
As if they surely knew their sovereign Lord was by.

But peaceful was the night,
Wherein the Prince of Light
His reign of peace upon the earth began:
The winds, with wonder whist,
Smoothly the waters kist,
Whispering new joys to the mild ocean;
Who now hath quite forgot to rave,
While birds of calm sit brooding on the charmed
wave.

The stars, with deep amaze,
Stand fix'd in stedfast gaze,
  Bending one way their precious influence;
And will not take their flight,
For all the morning light,
  Or Lucifer that often warn'd them thence;
But in their glimmering orbs did glow,
Until their Lord himself bespake, and bid them go.

And, though the shady gloom
Had given day her room,
  The sun himself withheld his wonted speed,
And hid his head for shame,
As his inferior flame
  The new-enlighten'd world no more should need;
He saw a greater Sun appear [bear.
Than his bright throne, or burning axletree, could

The shepherds on the lawn,
Or ere the point of dawn,
  Sat simply chatting in a rustic row;
Full little thought they then,
That the mighty Pan
  Was kindly come to live with them below;
Perhaps their loves, or else their sheep,
Was all that did their silly thoughts so busy keep.

When such music sweet
Their hearts and ears did greet,
  As never was by mortal finger strook;
Divinely-warbled voice
Answering the stringed noise,
  As all their souls in blissful rapture took:
The air, such pleasure loth to lose, [close.
With thousand echoes still prolongs each heavenly

Nature, that heard such sound,
Beneath the hollow round
  Of Cynthia's seat, the airy region thrilling,
Now was almost won
To think her part was done,
  And that her reign had here its last fulfilling;
She knew such harmony alone
Could hold all Heaven and Earth in happier union.

At last surrounds their sight
A globe of circular light,
  That with long beams the shamefac'd night ar-
The helmed Cherubim, [ray'd;
And sworded Seraphim,
  Are seen in glittering ranks with wings display'd,
Harping in loud and solemn quire, [Heir.
With unexpressive notes, to Heaven's new-born

Such music (as 'tis said)
Before was never made,
  But when of old the sons of morning sung,
While the Creator great
His constellations set,
  And the well-balanc'd world on hinges hung;
And cast the dark foundations deep,
And bid the weltering waves their oozy channel keep.

Ring out, ye crystal spheres,
Once bless our human ears,
  If ye have power to touch our senses so;
And let your silver chime
Move in melodious time;
  And let the base of Heaven's deep organ blow;
And, with your ninefold harmony,
Make up full consort to the' angelic symphony.

For if such holy song
Enwrap our fancy long,
  Time will run back, and fetch the age of gold;
And speckled Vanity
Will sicken soon and die,
  And leprous Sin will melt from earthly mould;
And Hell itself will pass away,
And leave her dolorous mansions to the peering day.

Yea, Truth and Justice then
Will down return to men,
  Orb'd in a rainbow; and, like glories wearing,
Mercy will sit between,
Thron'd in celestial sheen,
  With radiant feet the tissued clouds down steer-
And Heaven, as at some festival, [ing;
Will open wide the gates of her high palace hall.

But wisest Fate says no,
This must not yet be so;
  The Babe yet lies in smiling infancy,
That, on the bitter cross,
Must redeem our loss;
  So both himself and us to glorify;
Yet first, to those ychain'd in sleep, [the deep;
The wakeful trump of doom must thunder through

With such a horrid clang
As on mount Sinai rang,
  While the red fire and smouldring clouds out
The aged earth aghast, [broke:
With terror of that blast,
  Shall from the surface to the centre shake:
When, at the world's last session, [throne.
The dreadful Judge in middle air shall spread his

And then at last our bliss
Full and perfect is,
  But now begins: for, from this happy day,
The' old Dragon, under ground,
In straiter limits bound,
  Not half so far casts his usurped sway;
And, wroth to see his kingdom fail,
Swinges the scaly horror of his folded tail.

The oracles are dumb;
No voice, or hideous hum,
  Runs through the arched roof, in words deceiving:
Apollo, from his shrine,
Can no more divine,
  With hollow shriek the steep of Delphos leaving:
No nightly trance, or breathed spell,
Inspires the pale-ey'd priest from the prophetic cell.

The lonely mountains o'er,
And the resounding shore,
  A voice of weeping heard, and loud lament;
From haunted spring and dale,
Edg'd with poplar pale,
  The parting genius is with sighing sent;
With flower-inwoven tresses torn,
  The nymphs in twilight shade of tangled thickets [mourn.

In consecrated earth,
And on the holy hearth,
  The Lars and Lemures moan with midnight plaint;
In urns and altars round,
A drear and dying sound
  Affrights the flamens at their service quaint;
And the chill marble seems to sweat,
While each peculiar Power foregoes his wonted seat.

Peor and Baälim
Forsake their temples dim,
With that twice-batter'd god of Palestine;
And mooned Ashtaroth,
Heaven's queen and mother both,
Now sits not girt with tapers' holy shine;
The Lybic Hammon shrinks his horn, [mourn.
In vain the Tyrian maids their wounded Thammuz

And sullen Moloch, fled,
Hath left in shadows dread
His burning idol all of blackest hue;
In vain with cymbals' ring
They call the grisly king,
In dismal dance, about the furnace blue:
The brutish gods of Nile as fast,
Isis and Orus, and the dog Anubis, haste,

Nor is Osiris seen,
In Memphian grove or green,
Trampling the unshower'd grass with lowings loud:
Nor can he be at rest [loud:
Within his sacred chest;
Nought but profoundest hell can be his shroud;
In vain, with timbrel'd anthems dark,
The sable-stoled sorcerers bear his worship'd ark.

He feels from Juda's land
The dreaded Infant's hand,
The rays of Bethlehem blind his dusky eyne;
Nor all the gods beside
Longer dare abide,
Not Typhon huge, ending in snaky twine:
Our Babe, to show his Godhead true,
Can in his swaddling bands control the damned crew.

So, when the sun in bed,
Curtain'd with cloudy red,
  Pillows his chin upon an orient wave,
The flocking shadows pale
Troop to the' infernal jail,
  Each fetter'd ghost slips to his several grave;
And the yellow-skirted fayes [maze.
Fly after the night-steeds, leaving their moon-lov'd

But see, the Virgin bless'd
Hath laid her Babe to rest;
  Time is, our tedious song should here have end-
Heaven's youngest-teemed star [ing:
Hath fix'd her polish'd car,
  Her sleeping Lord with handmaid lamp attend-
And all about the courtly stable [ing:
Bright-harness'd angels sit in order serviceable.

THE PASSION.

Erewhile of music, and ethereal mirth,
Wherewith the stage of air and earth did ring,
And joyous news of heavenly Infant's birth,
My Muse with Angels did divide to sing;
But headlong joy is ever on the wing,
In wintry solstice like the shorten'd light,
Soon swallow'd up in dark and long out-living night.

For now to sorrow must I tune my song,
And set my harp to notes of saddest woe,
Which on our dearest Lord did seize ere long,
Dangers, and snares, and wrongs, and worse than so,
Which he for us did freely undergo:

Most perfect Hero, tried in heaviest plight
Of labours huge and hard, too hard for human wight!

He, sovereign Priest, stooping his regal head,
That drop'd with odorous oil down his fair eyes,
Poor fleshy tabernacle entered,
His starry front low-rooft beneath the skies:
O, what a maak was there, what a disguise!
Yet more; the stroke of death he must abide,
Then lies him meekly down fast by his brethren's side.

These latest scenes confine my roving verse;
To this horizon is my Phœbus bound:
His godlike acts, and his temptations fierce,
And former sufferings, other where are found;
Loud o'er the rest Cremona's trump doth sound;
Me softer airs befit, and softer strings
Of lute or viol still, more apt for mournful things.

Befriend me, Night, best patroness of grief;
Over the pole thy thickest mantle throw,
And work my flattered fancy to belief,
That Heaven and Earth are colour'd with my woe;
My sorrows are too dark for day to know:
The leaves should all be black whereon I write,
And letters, where my tears have wash'd, a wannish white.

See, see the chariot, and those rushing wheels,
That whirl'd the Prophet up at Chebar flood;
My spirit some transporting Cherub feels,
To bear me where the towers of Salam stood,
Once glorious towers, now sunk in guiltless blood:
There doth my soul in holy vision sit,
In pensive trance, and anguish, and ecstatic fit.

Mine eye hath found that sad sepulchral rock
That was the casket of Heaven's richest store;
And here, though grief my feeble hands up lock,
Yet on the soften'd quarry would I score
My plaining verse as lively as before:
For sure so well instructed are my tears,
That they would fitly fall in order'd characters.

Or should I thence, hurried on viewless wing,
Take up a weeping on the mountains wild,
The gentle neighbourhood of grove and spring
Would soon unbosom all their echoes mild;
And I (for grief is easily beguil'd)
Might think the' infection of my sorrows loud
Had got a race of mourners on some pregnant cloud.

This subject the Author finding to be above the years he had, when he wrote it, and nothing satisfied with what was begun, left it unfinished.

UPON THE

CIRCUMCISION.

Ye flaming Powers, and winged Warriors bright,
That erst with music, and triumphant song,
First heard by happy watchful shepherds' ear,
So sweetly sung your joy the clouds along
Through the soft silence of the listening night;
Now mourn; and, if sad share with us to bear
Your fiery essence can distil no tear,
Burn in your sighs, and borrow
Seas wept from our deep sorrow:
He, who with all Heaven's heraldry whilere

Enter'd the world, now bleeds to give us ease.
Alas, how soon our sin
Sore doth begin
His infancy to seize!
O more exceeding love, or law more just?
Just law indeed, but more exceeding love!
For we, by rightful doom remediless,
Were lost in death, till he, that dwelt above
High thron'd in secret bliss, for us frail dust
Emptied his glory, even to nakedness;
And that great covenant which we still transgress
Entirely satisfied;
And the full wrath beside
Of vengeful justice bore for our excess;
And seals obedience first, with wounding smart,
This day; but O, ere long,
Huge pangs and strong
Will pierce more near his heart.

ON THE

DEATH OF A FAIR INFANT.

DYING OF A COUGH.*

O FAIREST FLOWER, no sooner blown but blasted,
Soft silken primrose, fading timelessly,
Summer's chief honour, if thou hadst out-lasted
Bleak Winter's force that made thy blossom dry:
For he, being amorous on that lovely dye

* Written in 1625, when Milton was seventeen. The infant was a daughter of the poet's sister Phillips.

Warton.

That did thy cheek envermeil, thought to kiss,
But kill'd, alas! and then bewail'd his fatal bliss.

For since grim Aquilo, his charioteer,
By boisterous rape the' Athenian damsel got,
He thought it touch'd his deity full near,
If likewise he some fair one wedded not,
Thereby to wipe away the' infamous blot
Of long-uncoupled bed and childless eld,
Which, 'mongst the wanton gods, a foul reproach
was held.

So, mounting up in icy-pearled car,
Through middle empire of the freezing air
He wander'd long, till thee he spied from far;
There ended was his quest, there ceas'd his care:
Down he descended from his snow-soft chair,
But, all unwares, with his cold-kind embrace
Unhous'd thy virgin soul from her fair biding place.

Yet art thou not inglorious in thy fate;
For so Apollo, with unweeting hand,
Whilom did slay his dearly-loved mate,
Young Hyacinth, born on Eurotas' strand,
Young Hyacinth, the pride of Spartan land;
But then transform'd him to a purple flower:
Alack, that so to change thee Winter had no
power!

Yet can I not persuade me thou art dead,
Or that thy corse corrupts in earth's dark womb,
Or that thy beauties lie in wormy bed,
Hid from the world in a low-delved tomb;
Could Heaven for pity thee so strictly doom?

Oh no! for something in thy face did shine
Above mortality, that show'd thou was divine.

Resolve me then, oh Soul most surely bless'd,
(If so it be that thou these plaints dost hear;)
Tell me, bright Spirit, where'er thou hoverest,
Whether above that high first-moving sphere,
Or in the' Elysian fields, (if such there were;)
Oh say me true, if thou wert mortal wight,
And why from us so quickly thou didst take thy flight?

Wert thou some star which from the ruin'd roof
Of shak'd Olympus by mischance didst fall;
Which careful Jove in Nature's true behoof
Took up, and in fit place did reinstall?
Or did of late Earth's sons besiege the wall
Of sheeny Heaven, and thou, some Goddess fled,
Amongst us here below to hide thy nectar'd head?

Or wert thou that just Maid, who once before
Forsook the hated earth, O tell me sooth,
And cam'st again to visit us once more?
Or wert thou [Mercy,] that sweet-smiling youth?
Or that crown'd matron sage white-robed Truth?
Or any other of that heavenly brood [good?
Let down in cloudy throne to do the world some

Or wert thou of the golden-winged host,
Who, having clad thyself in human weed,
To earth from thy prefixed seat didst post,
And after short abode fly back with speed,
As if to show what creatures heaven doth breed;
Thereby to set the hearts of men on fire
To scorn the sordid world, and unto heaven aspire?

But oh! why didst thou not stay here below,
To bless us with thy heaven-lov'd innocence,
To slake his wrath whom sin hath made our foe,
To turn swift-rushing black Perdition hence,
Or drive away the slaughtering Pestilence,
  To stand 'twixt us and our deserved smart?—
But thou canst best perform that office where thou
art.

Then thou, the Mother of so sweet a Child,
Her false-imagin'd loss cease to lament,
And wisely learn to curb thy sorrows wild;
Think what a present thou to God hast sent,
And render him with patience what he lent:
  This if thou do, he will an offspring give,
That, till the world's last end, shall make thy name
to live.

*ON TIME.**

Fly, envious Time, till thou run out thy race;
Call on the lazy leaden-stepping hours,
Whose speed is but the heavy plummet's pace;
And glut thyself with what thy womb devours,
Which is no more than what is false and vain,
And merely mortal dross;
So little is our loss,
So little is thy gain!
For when as each thing bad thou hast entomb'd,
And last of all thy greedy self consum'd,

* In Milton's manuscript, written with his own hand, the title is, 'On Time. *To be set on a clock-case.*'

Then long Eternity shall greet our bliss
With an individual kiss;
And Joy shall overtake us as a flood,
When every thing that is sincerely good
And perfectly divine,
With Truth, and Peace, and Love, shall ever shine
About the supreme throne
Of Him, to' whose happy-making sight alone
When once our heavenly guided soul shall climb;
Then, all this earthly grossness quit,
Attir'd with stars, we shall for ever sit, [O Time!
Triumphing over Death, and Chance, and thee,

AT

A SOLEMN MUSIC.

Bless'd pair of Syrens, pledges of Heaven's joy,
Sphere-born harmonious sisters, Voice and Verse,
Wed your divine sounds, and mix'd power employ
Dead things with inbreath'd sense able to pierce;
And to our high-rais'd phantasy present
That undisturbed song of pure concent,
Aye sung before the sapphire-colour'd throne
To him that sits thereon,
With saintly shout, and solemn jubilee;
Where the bright Seraphim, in burning row,
Their loud up-lifted angel-trumpets blow:
And the cherubic host, in thousand quires,
Touch their immortal harps of golden wires,
With those just Spirits that wear victorious palms,
Hymns devout and holy psalms
Singing everlastingly:

That we on earth, with undiscording voice,
May rightly answer that melodious noise;
As once we did; till disproportion'd sin
Jarr'd against Nature's chime, and with harsh din
Broke the fair music that all creatures made
To their great Lord, whose love their motion sway'd
In perfect diapason, whilst they stood
In first obedience, and their state of good.
O, may we soon again renew that song,
And keep in tune with Heaven, till God ere long
To his celestial concert us unite,
To live with him, and sing in endless morn of light!

AN

EPITAPH

ON THE

*MARCHIONESS OF WINCHESTER.**

This rich marble doth inter
The honour'd wife of Winchester,
A Viscount's daughter, an Earl's heir,
Besides what her virtues fair
Added to her noble birth,
More than she could own from earth.
Summers three times eight save one
She had told; alas! too soon,
After so short time of breath,
To house with darkness, and with death.

* Jane, daughter of Thomas, Viscount Savage, and wife of John, Marquis of Winchester.

Yet had the number of her days
Been as complete as was her praise,
Nature and Fate had had no strife
In giving limit to her life.
  Her high birth, and her graces sweet,
Quickly found a lover meet;
The virgin quire for her request
The God that sits at marriage feast;
He at their invoking came,
But with a scarce well-lighted flame;
And in his garland, as he stood,
Ye might discern a cypress bud.
Once had the early matrons run
To greet her of a lovely son,
And now with second hope she goes,
And calls Lucina to her throes;
But, whether by mischance or blame,
Atropos for Lucina came;
And with remorseless cruelty
Spoil'd at once both fruit and tree:
The hapless babe, before his birth,
Had burial, yet not laid in earth;
And the languish'd mother's womb
Was not long a living tomb.
  So have I seen some tender slip,
Sav'd with care from winter's nip,
The pride of her carnation train,
Pluck'd up by some unheedy swain,
Who only thought to crop the flower,
New shot up from vernal shower;
But the fair blossom hangs the head
Side-ways, as on a dying bed,
And those pearls of dew she wears,
Prove to be presaging tears,

Which the sad morn had let fall
On her hastening funeral.
Gentle Lady, may thy grave
Peace and quiet ever have;
After this thy travail sore
Sweet rest seize thee evermore,
That to give the world increase,
Shorten'd hast thy own life's lease.
Here, besides the sorrowing
That thy noble house doth bring,
Here be tears of perfect moan
Wept for thee in Helicon;
And some flowers, and some bays,
For thy hearse, to strew the ways,
Sent thee from the banks of Came,
Devoted to thy virtuous name;
Whilst thou, bright Saint, high sit'st in glory,
Next her, much like to thee in story,
That fair Syrian shepherdess,*
Who, after years of barrenness,
The highly favour'd Joseph bore
To him that serv'd for her before,
And at her next birth, much like thee,
Through pangs fled to felicity,
Far within the bosom bright
Of blazing Majesty and Light:
There with thee, new welcome Saint,
Like fortunes may her soul acquaint,
With thee there clad in radiant sheen,
No Marchioness, but now a Queen.

* Rachael, the daughter of Laban, and wife of Jacob. She died in giving birth to Benjamin.

SONG

ON

MAY MORNING.

Now the bright Morning-star, day's harbinger,
Comes dancing from the east, and leads with her
The flowery May, who from her green lap throws
The yellow cowslip and the pale primrose.
Hail, bounteous May, that dost inspire
Mirth, and youth, and warm desire;
Woods and groves are of thy dressing,
  Hill, and dale, doth boast thy blessing.
Thus we salute thee with our early song,
  And welcome thee, and wish thee long.

MISCELLANIES.

ANNO ÆTATIS XIX.

At a VACATION EXERCISE *in the* COLLEGE, part Latin, part English. *The Latin speeches ended, the English thus begun.*

[*Written in* 1627.]

HAIL, native Language, that by sinews weak
Didst move my first endeavouring tongue to speak,
And mad'st imperfect words with childish trips,
Half unpronounc'd, slide through my infant-lips,
Driving dumb Silence from the portal door,
Where he had mutely sat two years before:
Here I salute thee, and thy pardon ask,
That now I use thee in my latter task:
Small loss it is that thence can come unto thee,
I know my tongue but little grace can do thee:
Thou need'st not be ambitious to be first,
Believe me I have thither pack'd the worst:
And, if it happen as I did fosecast,
The daintiest dishes shall be serv'd up last.
I pray thee then deny me not thy aid
For this same small neglect that I have made:
But haste thee straight to do me once a pleasure,
And from thy wardrobe bring thy chiefest treasure,

Not those new-fangled toys, and trimming slight,
Which takes our late fantastics with delight;
But cull those richest robes, and gay'st attire,
Which deepest spirits and choicest wits desire.
I have some naked thoughts that rove about,
And loudly knock to have their passage out;
And, weary of their place, do only stay,
Till thou hast deck'd them in thy best array;
That so they may, without suspect or fears,
Fly swiftly to this fair assembly's ears;
Yet I had rather, if I were to choose,
Thy service in some graver subject use,
Such as may make thee search thy coffers round,
Before thou clothe my fancy in fit sound:
Such where the deep transported mind may soar
Above the wheeling poles, and at Heaven's door
Look in, and see each blissful deity
How he before the thundrous throne doth lie,
Listening to what unshorn Apollo sings
To' the touch of golden wires, while Hebe brings
Immortal nectar to her kingly sire:
Then passing through the spheres of watchful fire,
And misty regions of wide air next under,
And hills of snow, and lofts of piled thunder,
May tell at length how green-ey'd Neptune raves,
In Heaven's defiance mustering all his waves;
Then sing of secret things that came to pass
When beldam Nature in her cradle was;
And last of kings, and queens, and heroes old,
Such as the wise Demodocus once told
In solemn songs at king Alcinus' feast,
While sad Ulysses' soul, and all the rest,
Are held, with his melodious harmony,
In willing chains and sweet captivity.

But fie, my wander'ng Muse, how thou dost stray!
Expectance calls thee now another way:
Thou know'st it must be now thy only bent
To keep in compass' of thy predicament:
Then quick about thy purpos'd business come,
That to the next I may resign my room.

Then ENS *is represented as father of the* PREDICAMENTS *his two sons, whereof the eldest stood for* SUBSTANCE *with his canons; which* ENS *thus speaking, explains.*

GOOD luck befriend thee, Son; for, at thy birth,
The faery ladies danc'd upon the hearth;
Thy drowsy nurse hath sworn she did them spy
Come tripping to the room where thou didst lie,
And, sweetly singing round about thy bed,
Strew all their blessings on thy sleeping head.
She heard them give thee this, that thou shouldst
From eyes of mortals walk invisible: [still
Yet there is something that doth force my fear;
For once it was my dismal hap to hear
A Sibyl old, bow-bent with crooked age,
That far events full wisely could presage,
And, in time's long and dark perspective glass,
Foresaw what future days should bring to pass;
'Your son,' said she, '(nor can you it prevent)
Shall subject be to many an Accident.
O'er all his brethren he shall reign as king,
Yet every one shall make him underling;
And those, that cannot live from him asunder,
Ungratefully shall strive to keep him under;

In worth and excellence he shall out-go them,
Yet, being above them, he shall be below them;
From others he shall stand in need of nothing,
Yet on his brothers shall depend for clothing.
To find a foe it shall not be his hap,
And Peace shall lull him in her flowery lap;
Yet shall he live in strife, and at his door
Devouring War shall never cease to roar:
Yea, it shall be his natural property
To harbour those that are at enmity.
What power, what force, what mighty spell, if not
Your learned hands can loose this Gordian knot?'

The next QUANTITY *and* QUALITY *spake in prose; then* RELATION *was called by his name.*

RIVERS, arise; whether thou be the son
Of utmost Tweed, or Oose, or gulfy Dun,
Or Trent, who, like some earth-born giant, spreads
Hist thirty arms along the' indented meads;
Or sullen Mole, that runneth underneath;
Or Severn swift, guilty of maiden's death;
Or rocky Avon, or of sedgy Lee,
Or coaly Tine, or ancient hallow'd Dee;
Or Humber loud, that keeps the Scythian's name;
Or Medway smooth, or royal-tower'd Thame.*

[*The rest was prose.*]

* It his hard to say, in what sense, or in what manner, this introduction of the rivers was to be applied to the subject. *Warton.*

AN EPITAPH

ON THE ADMIRABLE DRAMATIC POET,

*W. SHAKSPEARE.**

WHAT needs my Shakspeare, for his honour'd bones,
The labour of an age in piled stones?
Or that his hallow'd reliques should be hid
Under a star-ypointing pyramid?
Dear son of memory, great heir of fame,
What need'st thou such weak witness of thy name?
Thou, in our wonder and astonishment,
Hast built thyself a live-long monument.
For whilst, to' the shame of slow-endeavouring art,
Thy easy numbers flow; and that each heart
Hath, from the leaves of thy unvalued book,
Those Delphic lines with deep impression took;
Then thou, our fancy of itself bereaving,
Dost make us marble with too much conceiving;
And, so sepúlchred, in such pomp dost lie,
That kings, for such a tomb, would wish to die.

ON THE

UNIVERSITY CARRIER,

Who sickened in the time of his vacancy; being forbid to go to London, by reason of the plague†.

HERE lies old Hobson; Death hath broke his girt,
And here, alas! hath laid him in the dirt;

* This Epitaph is dated 1630, in Milton's own edition of his poems in 1673.

† Hobson, the Cambridge carrier, died Jan. 1, 1630, while the plague was in London.

Or else the ways being foul, twenty to one,
He's here stuck in a slough, and overthrown.
'Twas such a shifter, that, if truth were known,
Death was half glad when he had got him down;
For he had, any time this ten years full,
Dodg'd with him betwixt Cambridge and The Bull.*
And surely Death could never have prevail'd,
Had not his weekly course of carriage fail'd;
But lately finding him so long at home,
And thinking now his journey's end was come,
And that he had ta'en up his latest inn;
In the kind office of a chamberlain
Show'd him his room where he must lodge that night,
Pull'd off his boots, and took away the light:
If any ask for him, it shall be said,
'Hobson has supt, and's newly gone to bed.'

ANOTHER ON THE SAME.

Here lieth one, who did most truly prove
That he could never die while he could move;
So hung his destiny, never to rot
While he might still jog on and keep his trot,
Made of sphere-metal, never to decay
Until his revolution was at stay.
Time numbers motion, yet (without a crime
'Gainst old truth) motion number'd out his time:
And like an engine mov'd with wheel and weight,
His principles being ceas'd, he ended straight.
Rest, that gives all men life, gave him his death,
And too much breathing put him out of breath;

* In Bishopsgate-street, London.

Nor were it contradiction to affirm,
Too long vacation hasten'd on his term.
Merely to drive the time away he sicken'd,
Fainted, and died, nor would with ale be quicken'd;
'Nay,' quoth he, 'on his swooning bed outstretch'd,
If I mayn't carry, sure I'll ne'er be fetch'd,
But vow, though the cross doctors all stood bearers,
For one carrier put down to make six bearers.'
Ease was his chief disease; and, to judge right,
He died for heaviness that his cart went light;
His leisure told him that his time was come,
And lack of load made his life burdensome,
That ev'n to his last breath, (there be that say't)
As he were press'd to death, he cried, 'More [weight;'
But, had his doings lasted as they were,
He had been an immortal carrier.
Obedient to the moon he spent his date
In course reciprocal, and had his fate
Link'd to the mutual flowing of the seas,
Yet (strange to think) his *wain* was his *increase*:
His letters are deliver'd all and gone,
Only remains this superscription.

ON THE NEW FORCERS OF CONSCIENCE UNDER THE

LONG PARLIAMENT.

Because you have thrown off your Prelate-Lord,
And with stiff vows renounc'd his Liturgy,
To seize the widow'd whore Plurality
From them whose sin ye envied, not abhorr'd;
Dare ye for this abjure the civil sword

To force our consciences that Christ set free,
And ride us with a classic hierarchy
Taught ye by mere A. S.* and Rotherford?†
Men, whose life, learning, faith, and pure intent,
Would have been held in high esteem with Paul,
Must now be nam'd and printed Heretics
By shallow Edwards‡ and Scotch what d'ye call:§
But we do hope to find out all your tricks,
Your plots and packing worse than those of Trent;
That so the Parliament
May, with their wholesome and preventive shears,
Clip your phylacteries, though balk your ears,
And succour our just fears,
When they shall read this clearly in your charge,
'New Presbyter is but old Priest writ large.'

* Adam Steuart, a divine of the church of Scotland, and the author of several polemical tracts: some portions of which commence with A. S. only prefixed. *Todd.*

† Samuel Rotherford, or Rutherford, one of the chief commissioners of the church of Scotland, and professor of divinity in the university of St. Andrew. He published a great variety of Calvinistic tracts.

‡ Thomas Edwards, minister, a pamphleteering opponent of Milton; whose plan of independency he assailed with shallow invectives.

§ Perhaps Henderson, or Galaspie, Scotch divines: the former of whom appears as 'a loving friend,' in Rutherford's Joshua Redivivus; and the latter was one of the ecclesiastical commissioners at Westminster. *Warton.*

TRANSLATIONS.

THE FIFTH ODE OF HORACE, LIB. I.

WHAT slender youth, bedew'd with liquid odours,
Courts thee on roses in some pleasant cave,
    Pyrrha? For whom bind'st thou
    In wreaths thy golden hair,
Plain in thy neatness? O, how oft shall he
On faith and changed gods complain, and seas
    Rough with black winds, and storms
    Unwonted shall admire!
Who now enjoys thee credulous, all gold,
Who always vacant, always amiable
    Hopes thee, of flattering gales
    Unmindful. Hapless they [vow'd
To whom thou' untried seem'st fair! Me, in my
Picture, the sacred wall declares to' have hung
    My dank and dropping weeds
    To the stern god of sea.

FROM GEOFFREY OF MONMOUTH.*

BRUTUS *thus addresses* DIANA *in the country of* LEOGECIA.

GODDESS of shades, and huntress, who at will
Walk'st on the rolling spheres, and through the deep;

* *Hist. Brit.* i. xi. "Diva potens nemorum." &c.

On thy third reign, the earth, look now, and tell
What land, what seat of rest, thou bidst me seek;
What certain seat, where I may worship thee
For aye, with temples vow'd and virgin quires.

To whom, sleeping before the altar, DIANA *answers in a vision, the same night.*

BRUTUS, far to the west, in the ocean wide,
Beyond the realm of Gaul, a land there lies,
Sea-girt it lies, where giants dwelt of old;
Now void, it fits thy people: thither bend
Thy course; there shalt thou find a lasting seat;
There to thy sons another Troy shall rise,
And kings be born of thee, whose dreadful might
Shall awe the world, and conquer nations bold.

FROM DANTE.

AH, Constantine, of how much ill was cause,
Not thy conversion, but those rich domains
That the first wealthy pope receiv'd of thee.

FROM DANTE.

FOUNDED in chaste and humble poverty,
'Gainst them that rais'd thee dost thou lift thy horn,
Impudent whore, where hast thou plac'd thy hope?
In thy adulterers, or thy ill-got wealth?
Another Constantine comes not in haste.

FROM ARIOSTO.

THEN pass'd he to a flowery mountain green,
Which once smelt sweet, now stinks as odiously:
This was the gift, if you the truth will have,
That Constantine to good Sylvester gave,

FROM HORACE.

WHOM do we count a good man? Whom but he
Who keeps the laws and statutes of the senate,
Who judges in great suits and controversies,
Whose witness and opinion wins the cause?
But his own house, and the whole neighbourhood,
Sees his foul inside through his whited skin.

FROM EURIPIDES.

THIS is true liberty, when freeborn men,
Having to' advise the public, may speak free;
Which he who can, and will, deserves high praise:
Who neither can, nor will, may hold his peace;
What can be juster in a state than this?

FROM HORACE.

——— Laughing to teach the truth,
What hinders? As some teachers give to boys
Junkets and knacks, that they may learn apace.

FROM HORACE.

——— Joking decides great things,
Stronger and better oft than earnest can.

FROM SOPHOCLES.

'TIS you that say it, not I. You do the deeds,
And your ungodly deeds find me the words.

FROM SENECA.

——— There can be slain
No sacrifice to God more acceptable,
Than an unjust and wicked king.

PSALM I.

Done into verse, 1653.

Bless'd is the man who hath not walk'd astray
In counsel of the wicked, and i' the way
Of sinners hath not stood, and in the seat
Of scorners hath not sat: but in the great
Jehovah's law is ever his delight,
And in his law he studies day and night.
He shall be as a tree which planted grows
By watery streams, and in his season knows
To yield his fruit, and his leaf shall not fall,
And what he takes in hand shall prosper all.
Not so the wicked, but as chaff which fann'd
The wind drives, so the wicked shall not stand
In judgment, or abide their trial then,
Nor sinners in the' assembly of just men.
For the Lord knows the upright way of the just,
And the way of bad men to ruin must.

PSALM II.

Done Aug. 8, 1653. *Terzetti.*

Why do the Gentiles tumult, and the Nations
Muse a vain thing, the kings of the' earth upstand
With power, and princes in their congregations
Lay deep their plots together through each land
Against the Lord and his Messiah dear?
Let us break off, say they, by strength of hand

Their bonds, and cast from us, no more to wear,
  Their twisted cords: He, who in heaven doth dwell,
  Shall laugh; the Lord shall scoff them; then, se-
Speak to them in his wrath, and in his fell [vere,
  And fierce ire trouble them; but I, saith he,
  Anointed have my King (though ye rebel)
On Sion my holy hill. A firm decree
  I will declare: The Lord to me hath said,
  Thou art my Son, I have begotten thee
This day; ask of me, and the grant is made;
  As thy possession I on thee bestow
  The heathen; and, as thy conquest to be sway'd,
Earth's utmost bounds: them shalt thou bring full low
  With iron sceptre bruis'd, and them disperse
  Like to a potter's vessel shiver'd so.
And now be wise at length, ye kings averse,
  Be taught, ye judges of the earth; with fear
  Jehovah serve, and let your joy converse
With trembling; kiss the Son, lest he appear
  In anger and ye perish in the way,
  If once his wrath take fire, like fuel sere,
Happy all those who have in him their stay!

PSALM III. Aug. 9, 1653.

When he fled from Absalom.

Lord, how many are my foes!
  How many those,
  That in arms against me rise!
  Many are they,
  That of my life distrustfully thus say;
No help for him in God there lies.

But thou, Lord, art my shield, my glory,
Thee, through my story,
The' exalter of my head I count;
Aloud I cried
Unto Jehovah, he full soon replied,
And heard me from his holy mount.

I lay and slept; I wak'd again;
For my sustain
Was the Lord. Of many millions
The populous rout
I fear not, though, encamping round about,
They pitch against me their pavilions.

Rise, Lord; save me, my [illegible]: for thou
Hast smote, ere now
On the cheek-bone all my foes,
Of men abhor'd
Hast broke the teeth. This help was from the Lord;
Thy blessing on thy people flows.

PSALM IV. Aug. 10, 1653.

Answer me when I call,
God of my righteousness;
In straits and in distress,
Thou didst me disenthrall
And set at large; now spare,
Now pity me, and hear my earnest prayer.
Great ones, how long will ye
My glory have in scorn?
How long be thus forborne
Still to love vanity?
To love, to seek, to prize,
Things false and vain, and nothing else but lies?

Yet know the Lord hath chose,
Chose to himself apart,
The good and meek of heart;
(For whom to choose he knows)
Jehovah from on high
  Will hear my voice, what time to him I cry.
Be aw'd, and do not sin;
Speak to your hearts alone,
Upon your beds, each one,
And be at peace within:
Offer the offerings just
  Of righteousness, and in Jehovah trust.
Many there be that say,
Who yet will show us good?
Talking like this world's brood;
But, Lord, thus let me pray;
On us lift up the light,
  Lift up the favour of thy countenance bright.
Into my heart more joy
And gladness thou hast put,
Than when a year of glut
Their stores doth over-cloy,
And from their plenteous grounds
  With vast increase their corn and wine abounds.
In peace at once will I
Both lay me down and sleep;
For thou alone dost keep
Me safe where'er I lie;
As in a rocky cell
Thou, Lord! alone, in safety mak'st me dwell.

PSALM V. Aug. 12, 1653.

JEHOVAH! to my words give ear,
My meditation weigh;
The voice of my complaining hear,
My King and God; for unto thee I pray.
Jehovah! thou my early voice
Shalt in the morning hear;
I' the morning I to thee with choice
Will rank my prayers, and watch till thou appear.
For thou art not a God that takes
In wickedness delight;
Evil with thee no biding makes;
Fools or madmen stand not within thy sight.
All workers of iniquity
Thou hat'st; and them unbless'd
Thou wilt destroy that speak a lie;
The bloody and guileful man God doth detest.
But I will, in thy mercies dear,
Thy numerous mercies, go
Into thy house; I, in thy fear,
Will tow'rd thy holy temple worship low.
Lord! lead me in thy righteousness,
Lead me, because of those
That do observe if I transgress;
Set thy ways right before, where my step goes.
For in his faltering mouth unstable,
No word is firm or sooth,
Their inside, troubles miserable;
An open grave their throat, their tongue they smooth.
God! find them guilty, let them fall
By their own counsels quell'd;
Push them in their rebellions all
Still on; for against thee they have rebell'd.

Then all, who trust in thee, shall bring
Their joy; while thou from blame
Defend'st them, they shall ever sing
And shall triumph in thee, who love thy name:
For thou, Jehovah! wilt be found
To bless the just man still;
As with a shield, thou wilt surround
Him with thy lasting favour and good will.

PSALM VI. Aug. 13, 1653.

Lord, in thine anger do not reprehend me,
Nor in thy hot displeasure me correct;
Pity me, Lord, for I am much deject,
And very weak and faint; heal and amend me:
For all my bones, that ev'n with anguish ake,
Are troubled, yea my soul is troubled sore,
And thou, O Lord! how long? Turn, Lord; restore
My soul; O save me for thy goodness' sake!
For in death no remembrance is of thee;
Who in the grave can celebrate thy praise?
Wearied I am with sighing out my days;
Nightly my couch I make a kind of sea;
My bed I water with my tears; mine eye
Through grief consumes, is waxen old and dark
I' the midst of all mine enemies that mark.
Depart, all ye that work iniquity,
Depart from me; for the voice of my weeping
The Lord hath heard; the Lord hath heard my prayer;
My supplication with acceptance fair
The Lord will own, and have me in his keeping.

Mine enemies shall all be blank, and dash'd
With much confusion; then, grown red with shame,
They shall return in haste the way they came,
And in a moment shall be quite abash'd.

PSALM VII. Aug. 14, 1653.

Upon the words of Cush, the Benjamite, against him.

Lord, my God, to thee I fly;
Save me and secure me under
Thy protection, while I cry;
Lest, as the lion, (and no wonder,)
He haste to tear my soul asunder,
Tearing, and no rescue nigh.

Lord, my God, if I have thought
Or done this; if wickedness
Be in my hands; if I have wrought
Ill to him that meant me peace;
Or to him have render'd less,
And not freed my foe for nought;

Let the' enemy pursue my soul
And overtake it; let him tread
My life down to the earth, and roll
In the dust my glory dead,
In the dust; and, there outspread,
Lodge it with dishonour foul.

Rise, Jehovah! in thine ire,
Rouse thyself amidst the rage
Of my foes, that urge like fire;
And wake for me, their fury' assuage;

Judgment here thou didst engage
And command, which I desire.

So the' assemblies of each nation
Will surround thee, seeking right;
Thence to thy glorious habitation
Return on high, and in their sight.
Jehovah judgeth most upright
All people from the world's foundation.

Judge me, Lord; be judge in this
According to my righteousness,
And the innocence which is
Upon me: cause at length to cease
Of evil men the wickedness,
And their power that do amiss.

But the just establish fast,
Since thou' art the just God that tries
Hearts and reins. On God is cast
My defence, and in him lies.
In him who, both just and wise,
Saves the' upright of heart at last.

God is a just judge and severe,
And God is every day offended;
If the' unjust will not forbear,
His sword he whets, his bow hath bended
Already, and for him intended
The tools of death that wait him near.

(His arrows purposely made he
For them that persecute:) Behold,
He travails big with vanity;

Trouble he hath conceiv'd of old,
As in a womb; and from that mould
Hath at length brought forth a lie.

He digg'd a pit, and delv'd it deep,
And fell into the pit he made;
His mischief, that due course doth keep,
Turns on his head; and his ill trade
Of violence will, undelay'd,
Fall on his crown with ruin steep.

Then will I Jehovah's praise
According to his justice raise,
And sing the Name and Deity
Of Jehovah the Most High!

PSALM VIII. Aug. 14, 1653.

O Jehovah, our Lord, how wondrous great
And glorious is thy Name through all the earth!
So as above the heavens thy praise to set
Out of the tender mouths of latest birth.

Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou
Hast founded strength, because of all thy foes,
To stint the enemy, and slack the' avenger's brow,
That bends his rage thy Providence to' oppose.

When I behold thy heavens, thy fingers' art,
The moon, and stars, which thou so bright hast set
In the pure firmament: then saith my heart,
O, what is man that thou remembrest yet,

And think'st upon him; or of man begot,
  That him thou visit'st, and of him art found!
Scarce to be less than gods, thou mad'st his lot,
  With honour and with state thou hast him wr

O'er the works of thy hand thou mad'st him Lord
  Thou hast put all under his lordly feet;
All flocks, and herds, by thy commanding word,
  All beasts that in the field or forest meet;

Fowl of the heavens, and fish that through the w
  Sea-paths in shoals do slide, and know no dearth
O Jehovah, our Lord, how wondrous great
  And glorious is thy Name through all the earth!

April, 1648. J. M.

Nine of the Psalms done into metre, wherein all, but what is in a different character, are the very words of the text translated from the original.

PSALM LXXX.

1 Thou, Shepherd, that dost Israel *keep*,
  Give ear *in time of need;*
Who leadest like a flock of sheep
  Thy loved Joseph's seed;

That sitt'st between the Cherubs *bright,*
  Between their wings out-spread;
Shine forth, *and from thy cloud give light,*
  And on our foes thy dread.

2 In Ephraim's view and Benjamin's,
  And in Manasse's sight,
Awake thy strength, come, and *be seen*
  To save us *by thy might.*

3 Turn us again; *thy grace divine*
To us, O God, *vouchsafe;*
Cause thou thy face on us to shine,
And then we shall be safe.

4 Lord God of Hosts! how long wilt thou,
How long wilt thou declare
Thy smoking wrath, *and angry brow*
Against thy people's prayer!

5 Thou feed'st them with the bread of tears;
Their bread with tears they eat;
And mak'st them largely drink the tears
Wherewith their cheeks are wet.

6 A strife thou mak'st us *and a prey*
To every neighbour foe;
Among themselves they laugh, they play,
And flouts at us they throw.

7 Return us, *and thy grace divine,*
O God of Hosts! *vouchsafe;*
Cause thou thy face on us to shine,
And then we shall be safe.

8 A vine from Egypt thou hast brought,
Thy free love made it thine,
And drov'st out nations, *proud and haught,*
To plant this *lovely* vine.

9 Thou didst prepare for it a place,
And root it deep and fast,
That it *began to grow apace,*
And fill'd the land *at last.*

10 With her *green* shade that cover'd *all,*
The hills were *over-spread;*
Her boughs as *high as* cedars tall
Advanc'd their lofty head.

11 Her branches *on the western side*
Down to the sea she sent,
And *upward* to that river *wide*
Her other branches *went*.

12 Why hast thou laid her hedges low,
And broken down her fence,
That all may pluck her, as they go,
With rudest violence?

13 The *tusked* boar out of the wood
Up turns it by the roots;
Wild beasts there browse, and make their food
Her grapes and tender shoots.

14 Return now, God of Hosts! look down
From Heaven, thy seat divine;
Behold *us, but without a frown,*
And visit this *thy* vine.

15 Visit this vine, which thy right hand
Hath set, and planted *long,*
And the young branch, that for thyself
Thou hast made firm and strong.

16 But now it is consum'd with fire,
And cut *with axes* down;
They perish at thy dreadful ire,
At thy rebuke and frown.

17 Upon the man of thy right hand
Let thy *good* hand be *laid;*
Upon the son of man, whom thou
Strong for thyself hast made.

18 So shall we not go back from thee
To ways of sin and shame;
Quicken us thou; then *gladly* we
Shall call upon thy Name.

19 Return us, *and thy grace divine,*
Lord God of Hosts! *vouchsafe;*
Cause thou thy face on us to shine,
And then we shall be safe.

PSALM LXXXI.

1 To God our strength sing loud, *and clear,*
Sing loud to God *our King;*
To Jacob's God, *that all may hear,*
Loud acclamations ring.

2 Prepare a hymn, prepare a song,
The timbrel hither bring;
The *cheerful* psaltery bring along,
And harp *with* pleasant *string.*

3 Blow, *as is wont,* in the new moon,
With trumpets' *lofty sound,*
The' appointed time, the day whereon
Our solemn feast *comes round.*

4 This was a statute *given of old,*
For Israel *to observe;*
A law of Jacob's God, *to hold,*
From whence they might not swerve.

5 This he a testimony' ordain'd
In Joseph, *not to change;*
When as he pass'd through Egypt land;
The tongue I heard was strange.

6 From burden, *and from slavish toil,*
I set his shoulder free:
His hands from pots, *and miry soil,*
Deliver'd were *by me.*

7 When trouble did thee sore assail,
On me then didst thou call;
And I to free thee *did not fail,*
And led thee out of thrall.

I answer'd thee in thunder deep,
With clouds encompass'd round;
I tried thee at the water *steep*
Of Meriba *renown'd.*

8 Hear, O my people, *hearken well;*
I testify to thee,
Thou ancient stock of Israel,
If you wilt list to me:

9 Throughout the land of thy abode
No alien god shall be,
Nor shalt thou to a foreign god
In honour bend thy knee.

10 I am the Lord thy God, which brought
Thee out of Egypt land;
Ask large enough, and I, *besought,*
Will grant thy full demand.

11 And yet my people would not *hear,*
Nor hearken to my voice;
And Israel, *whom I lov'd so dear,*
Mislik'd me for his choice.

12 Then did I leave them to their will,
And to their wandering mind;
Their own conceits they follow'd still,
Their own devices blind.

13 O, that my people would *be wise,*
To serve me *all their days!*
And O, that Israel would *advise*
To walk my *righteous* ways!

14 Then would I soon bring down their foes,
That now so proudly rise;
And turn my hand against *all those,*
That are their enemies.

15 Who hate the Lord should *then be fain*
To bow to him and bend;
But *they, his people, should remain,*
Their time should have no end.

16 And he would feed them *from the shock*
With flower of finest wheat,
And satisfy them from the rock
With honey *for their meat.*

PSALM LXXXII.

1 God in the great assembly stands
Of kings and lordly states;
Among the gods, on both his hands,
He judges and debates.

2 How long will ye pervert the right
With judgment false and wrong,
Favouring the wicked *by your might,*
Who thence grow bold and strong?

3 Regard the weak and fatherless,
Dispatch the poor man's cause;
And raise the man in deep distress
By just and equal laws.

4 Defend the poor and desolate,
And rescue from the hands
Of wicked men the low estate
Of him *that help demands.*

5 They know not, nor will understand,
In darkness they walk on;
The earth's foundations all are mov'd,
And out of order gone.

6 I said that ye were gods; yea, all
The sons of God Most High;
7 But ye shall die like men, and fall
As other princes *die*.

8 Rise, God; judge thou the earth *in might*,
This *wicked* earth redress;
For thou art he who shall by right
The nations all possess.

PSALM LXXXIII.

1 Be not thou silent *now at length*,
O God! hold not thy peace;
Sit thou not still; O God of *strength*,
We cry, and do not cease.

2 For lo, thy *furious* foes *now* swell,
And storm outrageously;
And they that hate thee, *proud and fell*,
Exalt their heads full high.

3 Against thy people they contrive
Their plots and counsels deep;
Them to ensnare they chiefly strive
Whom thou dost hide and keep.

4 Come, let us cut them off, say they,
Till they no nation be;
That Israel's name for ever may
Be lost in memory.

5 For they consult with all their might,
And all, as one in mind,
Themselves against thee they unite,
And in firm union bind.

6 The tents of Edom, and the brood
Of *scornful* Ishmael,
Moab, with them of Hagar's blood,
That in the desert dwell;

7 Gebal and Ammon *there conspire,*
And *hateful* Amalec,
The Philistines, and they of Tyre,
Whose bounds the sea doth check;

8 With them *great* Ashur also bands,
And doth confirm the knot:
All these have lent their armed hands
To aid the sons of Lot.

9 Do to them as to Midian *bold,*
That wasted all the coast;
To Sisera; and, as *is told,*
Thou didst to Jabin's *host,*

When, at the brook of Kishon *old,*
They were repuls'd and slain,
10 At Endor quite cut off, and roll'd
As dung upon the plain.

11 As Zeb and Oreb evil sped,
So let their princes speed;
As Zeba and Zalmunna *bled,*
So let their princes *bleed.*

12 *For they amidst their pride* have said,
By right now shall we seize
God's houses, and *will now invade*
Their stately palaces.

13 My God! O make them as a wheel,
No quiet let them find;
Giddy and *restless* let *them reel*
Like stubble from the wind.

14 As *when* an *aged* wood takes fire,
Which on a sudden strays,
The *greedy* flame runs higher and higher,
Till all the mountains blaze;

15 So with thy whirlwind them pursue,
And with thy tempest chase;
16 And, till they yield thee honour due,
Lord! fill with shame their face.

17 Asham'd and troubled, let them be,
Troubled and sham'd for ever;
Ever confounded, and so die
With shame, *and 'scape it never.*

18 Then shall they know that Thou, whose name
Jehovah is alone,
Art the Most High, *and Thou the same*
O'er all the earth *art One!*

PSALM LXXXIV.

1 How lovely are thy dwellings fair!
O Lord of Hosts, how dear
The *pleasant* tabernacles are,
Where thou dost dwell so near!

2 My soul doth long, and almost die,
Thy courts, O Lord, to see;
My heart and flesh aloud do cry,
O living God! for thee.

3 There ev'n the sparrow, *freed from wrong,*
Hath found a house of *rest;*
The swallow there, to lay her young,
Hath built her *brooding* nest;

Ev'n by thy altars, Lord of Hosts,
They find their safe abode;
And home they fly from round the coasts,
Tow'rd thee, my King, my God!

4 Happy, who in thy house reside,
Where thee they ever praise!
5 Happy, whose strength in thee doth 'bide,
And in their hearts thy ways!

6 They pass through Baca's *thirsty* vale,
That dry and barren ground;
As through a fruitful watery dale,
Where springs and showers abound.

7 They journey on from strength to strength
With joy and gladsome cheer,
Till all before *our* God *at length*
In Sion do appear.

8 Lord God of Hosts! hear *now* my prayer,
O Jacob's God! give ear:
9 Thou God, our shield, look on the face
Of thy anointed *dear.*

10 For one day in thy courts *to be,*
Is better, *and more bless'd,*
Than *in the joys of vanity*
A thousand days *at best.*

I, in the temple of my God,
Had rather keep a door,
Than dwell in tents, *and rich abode,*
With sin *for evermore.*

11 For God the Lord, both sun and shield,
Gives grace and glory *bright;*
No good from them shall be withheld,
Whose ways are just and right.

12 Lord *God* of Hosts! *that reign'st on high;*
That man is *truly* bless'd.
Who *only* on thee doth rely,
And in thee only rest.

PSALM LXXXV.

1 THY land to favour graciously
Thou hast not, Lord, been slack;
Thou hast from *hard* captivity
Returned Jacob back.

2 The' iniquity thou didst forgive
That wrought thy people woe;
And all their sin, *that did thee grieve,*
Hast hid *where none shall know.*

3 Thine anger all thou hadst remov'd,
And *calmly* didst return
From thy fierce wrath, which we had prov'd
Far worse than fire to burn.

4 God of our saving health and peace!
Turn us, and us restore;
Thine indignation cause to cease
Tow'rd us, *and chide no more.*

5 Wilt thou be angry without end,
For ever angry thus?
Wilt thou thy frowning ire extend,
From age to age, on us?

6 Wilt thou not turn and *hear our voice,*
And us again revive,
That so thy people may rejoice,
By thee preserv'd alive?

7 Cause us to see thy goodness, Lord,
To us thy mercy shew;
Thy saving health to us afford,
And life in us renew.

8 *And now,* what God the Lord will speak
I will *go straight and* hear,
For to his people he speaks peace,
And to his saints *full dear.*

To his dear saints he will speak peace;
But let them never more
Return to folly, *but surcease*
To trespass as before.

9 Surely, to such as do him fear
Salvation is at hand;
And glory shall *ere long appear*
To dwell within our land.

10 Mercy and Truth, *that long were miss'd,*
Now *joyfully* are met;
Sweet Peace and Righteousness have kiss'd,
And hand in hand are set.

11 Truth from the earth, *like to a flower,*
Shall bud and blossom *then;*
And Justice, from her heavenly bower,
Look down *on mortal men.*

12 The Lord will also then bestow
Whatever thing is good;
Our land shall forth in plenty throw
Her fruits *to be our food.*

13 Before him Righteousness shall go,
His royal harbinger:
Then will he come, and not be slow;
His footsteps cannot err.

PSALM LXXXVI.

1 Thy *gracious* ear, O Lord! incline,
O hear me, *I thee pray;*
For I am poor, and almost pine
With need, *and sad decay.*

2 Preserve my soul; for I have trod
  Thy ways, and love the just;
Save thou thy servant, O my God!
  Who *still* in thee doth trust.

3 Pity me, Lord, for daily thee
4 I call; O make rejoice
Thy servant's soul; for, Lord, to thee
  I lift my soul *and voice.*

5 For thou art good, thou, Lord! art prone
  To pardon, thou to all
Art full of mercy, thou *alone*
  To them that on thee call.

6 Unto my supplication, Lord,
  Give ear, and to the cry
Of my *incessant* prayers afford
  Thy hearing graciously.

7 I, in the day of my distress,
  Will call on thee *for aid;*
For thou wilt *grant* me *free access,*
  And answer *what I pray'd.*

8 Like thee among the gods is none,
  O Lord; nor any works
Of all that other gods have done
  Like to thy *glorious* works.

9 The Nations all whom thou hast made
  Shall come, *and all shall frame*
To bow them low before thee, Lord,
  And glorify thy Name.

10 For great thou art, and wonders great
  By thy strong hand are done;
Thou, *in thy everlasting seat,*
  Remainest God alone.

11 Teach me, O Lord, thy way *most right;*
I in thy truth will bide;
To fear thy name my heart unite,
So shall it never slide.

12 Thee will I praise, O Lord my God!
Thee honour and adore
With my whole heart, and blaze abroad
Thy Name for evermore.

13 For great thy mercy is tow'rd me,
And thou hast freed my soul,
Even from the lowest hell set free,
From deepest darkness foul.

14 O God, the proud against me rise,
And violent men are met
To seek my life, and in their eyes
No fear of thee have set.

15 But thou, Lord, art the God most mild,
Readiest thy grace to shew,
Slow to be angry, and *art styl'd*
Most merciful, most true.

16 O, turn to me *thy face at length,*
And me have mercy on;
Unto thy servant give thy strength,
And save thy handmaid's son.

17 Some sign of good to me afford,
And let my foes *then* see,
And be asham'd: because thou, Lord,
Dost help and comfort me.

PSALM LXXXVII.

1 Among the holy mountains *high*
Is his foundation fast;
There seated in his sanctuary,
His temple there is plac'd.

2 Sion's *fair* gates the Lord loves more
Than all the dwellings *fair*
Of Jacob's *land, though there be store,*
And all within his care.

3 City of God, most glorious things
Of thee *abroad* are spoke;
4 I mention Egypt, *where proud kings*
Did our forefathers yoke:
I mention Babel to my friends
Philistia *full of scorn;*
And Tyre with Ethiops' *utmost ends;*
Lo this man there was born:

5 But *twice that praise shall in our ear*
Be said of Sion *last;*
This and this man was born in her;
High God shall fix her fast.

6 The Lord shall write it in a scroll
That ne'er shall be out-worn,
When he the nations doth enrol,
That this man there was born.

7 Both they who sing, and they who dance,
With sacred songs are there;
In thee *fresh brooks, and soft streams glance,*
And all my fountains *clear.*

PSALM LXXXVIII.

1 Lord God! that dost me save and keep,
All day to thee I cry;
And all night long before thee weep,
Before thee *prostrate lie.*

2 Into thy presence let my prayer
With sighs devout ascend;
And to my cries, that *ceaseless are,*
Thine ear with favour bend.

3 For, cloy'd with woes and trouble sore,
Surcharg'd my soul doth lie;
My life, *at Death's uncheerful door,*
Unto the grave draws nigh.

4 Reckon'd I am with them that pass
Down to the *dismal* pit;
I am a man, but weak, alas!
And for that name unfit.

5 From life discharg'd and parted quite
Among the dead to *sleep;*
And like the slain in *bloody fight,*
That in the grave lie *deep.*

Whom thou rememberest no more,
Dost never more regard,
Them, from thy hand deliver'd o'er,
Death's hideous house hath barr'd.

6 Thou in the lowest pit *profound*
Hast set me *all forlorn,*
Where thickest darkness *hovers round,*
In horrid deeps *to mourn.*

7 Thy wrath, *from which no shelter saves,*
Full sore doth press on me;
Thou break'st upon me all thy waves,
And all thy waves break me.

8 Thou dost my friends from me estrange,
And mak'st me odious,
Me to them odious, *for they change,*
And I here pent up thus.

9 Through sorrow, and affliction great,
Mine eye grows dim and dead;
Lord! all the day I thee entreat,
My hands to thee I spread.

10 Wilt thou do wonders on the dead?
Shall the deceas'd arise,
And praise thee *from their loathsome bed*
With pale and hollow eyes?

11 Shall they thy loving kindness tell,
On whom the grave *hath held?*
Or they, who in perdition *dwell,*
Thy faithfulness *unfold?*

12 In darkness can thy mighty *hand*
Or wondrous acts be known?
Thy justice in the *gloomy* land
Of *dark* oblivion?

13 But I to thee, O Lord! do cry,
Ere yet my life be spent;
And *up to thee* my prayer *doth hie*
Each morn, and thee prevent.

14 Why wilt thou, Lord, my soul forsake,
And hide thy face from me,
15 That am already bruis'd, and shake
With terror sent from thee?

Bruis'd and afflicted, and *so low*
As ready to expire;
While I thy terrors undergo,
Astonish'd with thine ire.

16 Thy fierce wrath over me doth flow;
Thy threatenings cut me through:
17 All day they round about me go,
Like waves they me pursue.

18 Lover and friend thou hast remov'd,
And sever'd from me far:
They *fly me now* whom I have lov'd,
And as in darkness are.

A

PARAPHRASE ON PSALM CXIV.

This and the following Psalm were done by the Author at fifteen years old.

When the bless'd seed of Terah's faithful son,
After long toil, their liberty had won;
And past from Pharian fields to Canaan land,
Led by the strength of the Almighty's hand;
Jehovah's wonders were in Israel shown,
His praise and glory was in Israel known:
That saw the troubled Sea, and shivering fled,
And sought to hide his froth-becurled head
Low in the earth; Jordan's clear streams recoil,
As a faint host that hath receiv'd the foil.
The high huge-bellied mountains skip, like rams
Amongst their ewes; the little hills, like lambs.
Why fled the ocean? and why skipt the mountains?
Why turned Jordan tow'rd his crystal fountains?
Shake, Earth; and at the presence be aghast
Of him that ever was, and aye shall last;
That glassy floods from rugged rocks can crush,
And make soft rills from fiery flint-stones gush.

PSALM CXXXVI.

Let us, with a gladsome mind,
Praise the Lord, for he is kind;
  For his mercies aye endure,
Ever faithful, ever sure.

Let us blaze his name abroad,
For of gods he is the God.
  For his, *&c.*
O, let us his praises tell,
Who doth the wrathful tyrants quell,
  For his, *&c.*
Who with his miracles, doth make
Amazed Heaven and Earth to shake.
  For his, *&c.*
Who, by his wisdom, did create
The painted heavens so full of state.
  For his, *&c.*
Who did the solid earth ordain
To rise above the watery plain.
  For his, *&c.*
Who, by his all-commanding might,
Did fill the new-made world with light.
  For his, *&c.*
And caus'd the golden-tressed sun
All the day long his course to run.
  For his, *&c.*
The horned moon to shine by night,
Amongst her spangled sisters bright.
  For his, *&c.*
He, with his thunder-clasping hand,
Smote the first-born of Egypt land.
  For his, *&c.*
And, in despite of Pharaoh fell,
He brought from thence his Israël,
  For his, *&c.*
The ruddy waves he cleft in twain
Of the Erythræan main.
  For his, *&c.*

The floods stood still, like walls of glass,
While the Hebrew bands did pass.
  For his, *&c.*
But full soon they did devour
The tawny king with all his power.
  For his, *&c.*
His chosen people he did bless
In the wasteful wilderness.
  For his, *&c.*
In bloody battle he brought down
Kings of prowess and renown.
  For his, *&c.*
He foil'd bold Seon and his host,
That rul'd the Amorrëan coast.
  For his, *&c.*
And large-limb'd Og he did subdue,
With all his over-hardy crew.
  For his, *&c.*
And, to his servant Israël,
He gave their land therein to dwell.
  For his, *&c.*
He hath, with a piteous eye,
Beheld us in our misery.
  For his, *&c.*
And freed us from the slavery
Of the invading enemy.
  For his, *&c.*
All living creatures he doth feed,
And with full hand supplies their need.
  For his, &c.
Let us therefore warble forth
His mighty majesty and worth.
  For his, *&c.*

That his mansion hath on high
Above the reach of mortal eye.
  For his mercies aye endure,
  Ever faithful, ever sure.

THE END OF VOL. VII.

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